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ANNE SCOTT.

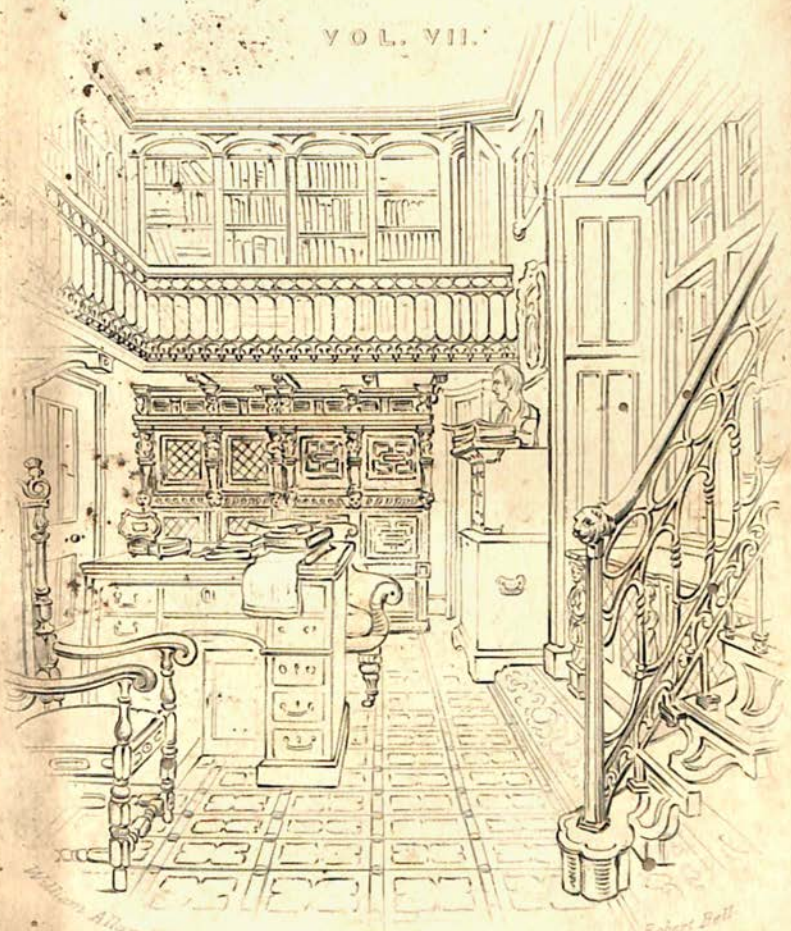
Second Daughter of Sir Walter Scott.

LIFE

OF

SIR WALTER SCOTT, BART.

VOL. VII.



William Allan R.A. Robert Bell

Sir Walter Scott's Study — Abbotsford

A. & C. BLACK, EDINBURGH

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MEMOIRS

OF THE

LIFE OF SIR WALTER SCOTT, BART.

BY

J. G. LOCKHART, ESQ.

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VOL. VII.

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MEMOIRS

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LIFE OF SIR WALTER SCOTT.

CHAPTER LV.

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1822.

In January 1822, Sir Walter had the great satisfaction of seeing Erskine at length promoted to a seat

on the Bench of the Court of Session, by the title of Lord Kinnedder; and his pleasure was enhanced doubtless by the reflection that his friend owed this elevation very much, if not mainly, to his own unwearied exertions on his behalf. This happy event occurred just about the time when Joanna Baillie was distressed by hearing of the sudden and total ruin of an old friend of hers, a Scotch gentleman long distinguished in the commerce of the city of London; and she thought of collecting among her literary acquaintance such contributions as might, with some gleanings of her own portfolios, fill up a volume of poetical miscellanies, to be published, by subscription, for the benefit of the merchant's family. In requesting Sir Walter to write something for this purpose, she also asked him to communicate the scheme, in her name, to various common friends in the North—among others, to the new Judge. Scott's answer was—

"*To Miss Joanna Baillie, Hampstead.*

"Edinburgh, Feb. 10, 1822.

"My Dear Friend,

"No one has so good a title as you to command me in all my strength, and in all my weakness. I do not believe I have a single scrap of unpublished poetry, for I was never a willing composer of occasional pieces, and when I have been guilty of such

effusions, it was to answer the purpose of some publisher of songs, or the like immediate demand. The consequence is, that all these trifles have been long before the public, and whatever I add to your collection must have the grace of novelty, in case it should have no other. I do not know what should make it rather a melancholy task for me now-a-days to sit down and versify—I did not use to think it so—but I have ceased, I know not why, to find pleasure in it, and yet I do not think I have lost any of the faculties I ever possessed for the task; but I was never fond of my own poetry, and am now much out of conceit with it. All this another person less candid in construction than yourself would interpret into a hint to send a good dose of praise—but you know we have agreed long ago to be above ordinances, like Cromwell's saints. When I go to the country upon the 12th of March, I will try what the water-side can do for me, for there is no inspiration in causeways and kennels, or even the Court of Session. You have the victory over me now, for I remember laughing at you for saying you could only write your beautiful lyrics upon a fine warm day. But what is this something to be? I wish you would give me a subject, for that would cut off half my difficulties.

"I am delighted with the prospect of seeing Miss Edgeworth, and making her personal acquaintance. I expect her to be just what you describe, a being

totally void of affectation, and who, like one other lady of my acquaintance, carries her literary reputation as freely and easily as the milk-maid in my country does the *leglen*, which she carries on her head, and walks as gracefully with it as a duchess. Some of the fair sex, and some of the foul sex, too, carry their renown in London fashion on a yoke and a pair of pitchers. The consequence is, that besides poking frightfully, they are hitting every one on the shins with their buckets. Now this is all nonsense —too fantastic to be written to anybody but a person of good sense. By the way, did you know Miss Austen, authoress of some novels which have a great deal of nature in them?—nature in ordinary and middle life, to be sure, but valuable from its strong resemblance and correct drawing. I wonder which way she carried her pail?*

* When the late collection of Sir Walter Scott's Prose Miscellanies was preparing, the publisher of the Quarterly Review led me into a mistake, which I may as well take this opportunity of apologizing for. Glancing hastily over his private records, he included in his list of Sir Walter's contributions to his journal an article on Miss Austen's novels, in No. xlviii. for January 1821; and as the opinions which the article expresses on their merits and defects harmonized with the usual tone of Scott's conversation, I saw no reason to doubt that he had drawn it up, although the style might have been considerably *doctored* by Mr Gifford. I have since learned that the reviewal in question was in fact written by Dr. Whately, now Archbishop of Dublin; and that the article which Scott did contribute to the Quarterly on the novels

"I did indeed rejoice at Erskine's promotion. There is a degree of melancholy attending the later stage of a barrister's profession, which, though no one cares for sentimentalities attendant on a man of fifty or thereabout, in a rusty black bombazine gown,

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of Miss Austen, was that which the reader will find in No. xxvii. *Emma*, and *Northanger Abbey*, in particular, were great favourites of his, and he often read chapters of them to his evening circle. "We bestow no mean compliment upon the author of Emma," says Sir Walter, "when we say, that keeping close to common incidents, and to such characters as occupy the ordinary walks of life, she has produced sketches of such spirit and originality, that we never miss the excitation which depends upon a narrative of uncommon events, arising from the consideration of minds, manners, and sentiments, greatly above our own. In this class she stands almost alone; for the scenes of Miss Edgeworth are laid in higher life, varied by more romantic incident, and by her remarkable power of embodying and illustrating national character. But the author of Emma confines herself chiefly to the middling classes of society; her most distinguished characters do not rise greatly above well-bred country gentlemen and ladies; and those which are sketched with most originality and precision, belong to a class rather below that standard. The narrative of all her novels is composed of such common occurrences as may have fallen under the observation of most folks; and her dramatis personæ conduct themselves upon the motives and principles which the readers may recognise as ruling their own and that of most of their acquaintances. The kind of moral, also, which these novels inculcate, applies equally to the paths of common life," &c. &c.

Quarterly Review, October 1815.

are not the less cruelly felt; their business sooner or later fails, for younger men will work cheaper, and longer, and harder—besides that the cases are few, comparatively, in which senior counsel are engaged, and it is not etiquette to ask any one in that advanced age to take the whole burden of a cause. Insensibly, without decay of talent, and without losing the public esteem, there is a gradual decay of employment, which almost no man ever practised thirty years without experiencing; and thus the honours and dignities of the Bench, so hardly earned, and themselves leading but to toils of another kind, are peculiarly desirable. Erskine would have sat there ten years ago, but for wretched intrigues. He has a very poetical and elegant mind, but I do not know of any poetry of his writing, except some additional stanzas to Collins' ode on Scottish superstitions, long since published in the Border Minstrelsy I doubt it would not be consistent with his high office to write poetry now, but you may add his name with Mrs Scott's (Heaven forgive me! I should have said Lady Scott's) and mine to the subscription-list. I will not promise to get you more, for people always look as if you were asking the guinea for yourself—there John Bull has the better of Sawney; to be sure, he has more guineas to bestow, but we retain our reluctance to part with hard cash, though profuse enough in our hospitality. I have

seen a laird, after giving us more champaign and claret than we cared to drink, look pale at the idea of paying a crown in charity.

"I am seriously tempted, though it would be sending coals to Newcastle with a vengeance, not to mention salt to Dysart, and all other superfluous importations — I am, I say, strangely tempted to write for your Protegés a dramatic scene on an incident which happened at the battle of Halidon Hill (I think.) It was to me a nursery tale, often told by Mrs Margaret Swinton, sister of my maternal grandmother; a fine old lady of high blood, and of as high a mind, who was lineally descended from one of the actors. The anecdote was briefly thus. The family of Swinton is very ancient, and was once very powerful, and at the period of this battle the knight of Swinton was gigantic in stature, unequalled in strength, and a sage and experienced leader to boot. In one of those quarrels which divided the kingdom of Scotland in every corner, he had slain his neighbour, the head of the Gordon family, and an inveterate feud had ensued; for it seems that powerful as the Gordons always were, the Swintons could then bide a bang with them. Well, the battle of Halidon began, and the Scottish army, unskilfully disposed on the side of a hill where no arrow fell in vain, was dreadfully galled by the archery of the English, as usual; upon which Swinton approached the Scottish General, requesting com-

mand of a body of cavalry, and pledging his honour that he would, if so supported, charge and disperse the English archery — one of the manœuvres by which Bruce gained the battle of Bannockburn.— This was refused, out of stupidity or sullenness, by the General, on which Swinton expressed his determination to charge at the head of his own followers, though totally inadequate for the purpose. The young Gordon heard the proposal, son of him whom Swinton had slain, and with one of those irregular bursts of generosity and feeling which redeem the dark ages from the character of utter barbarism, he threw himself from his horse, and kneeled down before Swinton.—'I have not yet been knighted,' he said, 'and never can I take the honour from the hand of a truer, more loyal, more valiant leader, than he who slew my father: grant me,' he said, 'the boon I ask, and I unite my forces to yours, that we may live and die together.' His feudal enemy became instantly his godfather in chivalry, and his ally in battle. Swinton knighted the young Gordon, and they rushed down at the head of their united retainers, dispersed the archery, and would have turned the battle, had they been supported. At length they both fell, and all who followed them were cut off; and it was remarked, that while the fight lasted, the old giant guarded the young man's life more than his own, and the same was indicated by the manner in which his body lay stretched over

that of Gordon. Now, do not laugh at my Berwickshire *burr*, which I assure you is literally and lineally handed down to me by my grandmother, from this fine old Goliah. Tell me, if I can clamper up the story into a sort of single scene, will it answer your purpose? I would rather try my hand in blank verse than rhyme.

"The story, with many others of the same kind, is consecrated to me by the remembrance of the narrator, with her brown silk gown, and triple ruffles, and her benevolent face, which was always beside our beds when there were childish complaints among us.* Poor Aunt Margaret had a most shocking fate, being murdered by a favourite maid-servant in a fit of insanity, when I was about ten years old; the catastrophe was much owing to the scrupulous delicacy and high courage of my poor relation, who would not have the assistance of men called in, for exposing the unhappy wretch her servant. I think you will not ask for a letter from me in a hurry again, but as I have no chance of seeing you for a long time, I must be contented with writing. My kindest respects attend Mrs Agnes, your kind brother and family, and the Richardsons, little and big, short and tall; and believe me most truly yours, W. Scott.

* See "*My Aunt Margaret's Mirror*," Waverley Novels. vol. xli. pp. 295, &c. See also *ante*, Vol I. p. 142.

"P.S.—Sophia is come up to her Sunday dinner, and begs to send a thousand remembrances, with the important intelligence that her baby actually says ma-ma, and bow wow, when he sees the dog. Moreover, he is christened John Hugh; and I intend to plant two little knolls at their cottage, to be called Mount Saint John, and Hugomont. The Papa also sends his respects."

About this time Cornet Scott, being for a short period in Edinburgh, sat to William Allan for that admirable portrait which now hangs (being the only picture in the room) over the mantelpiece of the Great Library at Abbotsford. Sir Walter, in extolling this performance to Lord Montagu, happened to mention that an engraving was about to appear from Mr Allan's "Death of Archbishop Sharp," and requested his lordship to subscribe for a copy of it. Lord Montagu read his letter hurriedly, and thought the forthcoming engraving was of the Cornet and his charger. He signified that he would very gladly have *that;* but took occasion to remind Sir Walter, that the Buccleuch family had not forgot his own old promise to sit to Raeburn for a portrait, to be hung up at Bowhill. Scott's letter of explanation includes his opinion of Horace Walpole's posthumous "Memoirs."

"*To the Lord Montagu.*

"Abbotsford, 15th March 1822.

"My Dear Lord,

"It is close firing to reply to your kind letter so soon, but I had led your Lordship into two mistakes, from writing my former letter in a hurry; and therefore to try whether I cannot contradict the old proverb of 'two blacks not making a white,' I write this in a hurry to mend former blunders.

"In the first place, I never dreamed of asking you to subscribe to a print of my son—it will be time for him to be *copperplated*, as Joseph Gillon used to call it, when he is major-general. I only meant to ask you to take a print of the Murder of Archbishop Sharp, and to mention historically that the same artist, who made a capital picture of that event, had painted for me a very good portrait of my son. I suppose I may apply your Lordship's kind permission to the work for which I *did* mean to require your patronage; and for a Scottish subject of interest by a Scottish artist of high promise, I will presume to reckon also on the patronage of my young chief. I had no idea of sitting for my own picture; and I think it will be as well to let Duke Walter, when he feels his own ground in the world, take his own taste in the way of adorning his house. Two or three years will make him an adequate judge on such a subject, and if they will not make me more

beautiful, they have every chance of making me more picturesque. The distinction was ably drawn in the case of parsons' horses, by Sydney Smith, in one of his lectures:—'The rector's horse is *beautiful*—the curate's is *picturesque*.' If the portrait had been begun, that were another matter; as it is, the Duke, when he is two or three years older, shall command my picture, as the original, *à vendre et à pendre*—an admirable expression of devotion, which I picked up from a curious letter of Lord Lovat's, which I found the other day. I am greatly afraid the said original will by and by be fit only for the last branch of the dilemma.

"Have you read Lord Orford's History of his own Time—it is acid and lively, but serves, I think, to show how little those who live in public business, and of course in constant agitation and intrigue, know about the real and deep progress of opinions and events. The Memoirs of our Scots Sir George Mackenzie are of the same class—both, immersed in little political detail, and the struggling skirmish of party, seem to have lost sight of the great progressive movements of human affairs. They put me somewhat in mind of a miller, who is so busy with the clatter of his own wheels, grindstones, and machinery, and so much employed in regulating his own artificial mill-dam, that he is incapable of noticing the gradual swell of the river from which he derives his little stream, until it comes down in

such force as to carry his whole manufactory away before it. It is comical, too, that Lord Orford should have delayed trusting the public with his reminiscences, until so many years had destroyed all our interest in the Parliamentary and Court intrigues which he tells with so much vivacity. It is like a man who should brick up a hogshead of cyder, to be drunk half a century afterwards, when it could contain little but acidity and vapidity.

"I am here, thank God, for two months. I have acquired, as I trust, a good gardener, warranted by Macdonald of Dalkeith. So the seeds, which your Lordship is so kind as to promise me, will be managed like a tansy. The greatest advance of age which I have yet found is liking a *cat*, an animal I detested, and becoming fond of a garden, an art which I despised — but I suppose the indulgent mother Nature has pets and hobby-horses suited to her children at all ages. — Ever, my dear Lord, most truly yours, WALTER SCOTT."

Acquiescing in the propriety of what Sir Walter had thus said respecting the proposed portrait for Bowhill, Lord Montagu requested him to sit without delay for a smaller picture on his own behalf; and the result was that half-length now at Ditton, which possesses a peculiar value and interest as being the very last work of Raeburn's pencil. The poet's answer to Lord Montagu's request was as follows:—

" *To the Lord Montagu.*

" Abbotsford, 27th March 1822.

" My Dear Lord,

" I should be very unworthy of so great a proof of your regard, did I not immediately assure you of the pleasure with which I will contribute the head you wish to the halls of Ditton. I know no place where the substance has been so happy, and, therefore, the shadow may be so far well placed. I will not suffer this important affair to languish so far as I am concerned, but will arrange with Raeburn when I return to Edinburgh in May. Allan is not in the ordinary habit of doing portraits, and as he is really a rising historical painter, I should be sorry to see him seduced into the lucrative branch which carries off most artists of that description. If he goes on as he has begun, the young Duke may one day patronise the Scottish Arts, so far as to order a picture of the " Releasing" of Kinmont Willie* from him. I agree entirely with your Lordship's idea of leaving the young chief to have the grace of forming his own ideas on many points, contenting yourself with giving him such principles as may enable him to judge rightly. I believe more youths of high ex-

* See, in the Border Minstrelsy (vol. ii. p. 32), the capital old ballad on this dashing exploit of " the Bold Buccleuch" of Queen Elizabeth's time.

pectation have bolted from the course, merely because well-meaning friends had taken too much care to *rope it in*, than from any other reason whatever. There is in youth a feeling of independence, a desire, in short, of being their own master, and enjoying their own free agency, which is not always attended to by guardians and parents, and hence the best laid schemes fail in execution from being a little too prominently brought forward. I trust that Walter, with the good sense which he seems to possess, will never lose that most amiable characteristic of his father's family, the love and affection which all the members of it have, for two generations, borne to each other, and which has made them patterns as well as blessings to the country they lived in. I have few happier days to look forward to (and yet, like all happiness which comes to grey-headed men, it will have a touch of sorrow in it), than that in which he shall assume his high situation with the resolution which I am sure he will have to be a good friend to the country in which he has so large a stake, and to the multitudes which must depend upon him for protection, countenance, and bread. Selfish feelings are so much the fashion among fashionable men — it is accounted so completely absurd to do anything which is not to contribute more or less directly to the immediate personal *eclat* or personal enjoyment of the party — that young men lose sight of real power and real importance, the foundation of

which must be laid, even selfishly considered, in contributing to the general welfare, — like those who have thrown their bread on the waters, expecting, and surely receiving, after many days, its return in gratitude, attachment, and support of every kind. The memory of the most splendid entertainment passes away with the season, but the money and pains bestowed upon a large estate not only contribute to its improvement, but root the bestower in the hearts of hundreds over hundreds; should these become needful, he is sure to exercise a correspondent influence. I cannot look forward to these as settled times. In the retrenchments proposed, Government agree to diminish their own influence, and while they contribute a comparative trifle to the relief of the public burdens, are making new discontents among those who, for interest's sake at least, were their natural adherents. In this they are acting weakly, and trying to soothe the insatiate appetite of innovation, by throwing down their out-works, as if that which renders attack more secure and easy would diminish the courage of the assailants. Last year the manufacturing classes were rising — this year the agricultural interest is discontented, and whatever temporary relief either class receives will indeed render them quiet for the moment, but not erase from their minds the rooted belief that the government and constitution of this country are in fault for their embarrassments. Well, I cannot help

it, and therefore will not think about it, for that at least I *can* help.

'Time and the hour run through the roughest day.'*

"We have had dreadful tempests here of wind and rain, and for a variety a little snow. I assure you it is as uncommon to see a hill with snow on its top these two last seasons as to see a beau on the better side of thirty with powder in his hair. I built an ice-house last year, and could get no ice to fill it—this year I took the opportunity of even poor twenty-four hours, and packed it full of hard-rammed snow—but lo ye—the snow is now *in meditatione fugæ*, and I wish I may have enough to cool a decanter when you come to Abbotsford, as I trust your Lordship will be likely to be here next autumn. It is worth while to come, were it but to see what a romance of a house I am making, which is neither to be castle nor abbey (God forbid!) but an old Scottish manor-house. I believe Atkinson is in despair with my whims, for he cries out *yes—yes—yes*, in a tone which exactly signifies *no—no—no, by no manner of means.*—Believe me always, my dear Lord, most gratefully yours, WALTER SCOTT."

At the commencement of this spring, then, Scott found his new edifice in rapid progress; and letters

* *Macbeth, Act I. Scene* 3.

on that subject to and from Terry, occupy, during many subsequent months, a very large share in his correspondence. Before the end of the vacation, however, he had finished the MS. of his Nigel. Nor had he lost sight of his promise to Joanna Baillie. He produced, and that, as I well remember, in the course of two rainy mornings, the dramatic sketch of Halidon Hill; but on concluding it, he found that he had given it an extent quite incompatible with his friend's arrangements for her charitable pic-nic. He therefore cast about for another subject likely to be embraced in smaller compass; and the Blair-Adam meeting of the next June supplied him with one in Macduff's Cross. Meantime, on hearing a whisper about Halidon Hill, Messrs Constable, without seeing the MS., forthwith tendered £1000 for the copyright —the same sum that had appeared almost irrationally munificent, when offered in 1807 for the embryo Marmion. It was accepted, and a letter from Constable himself, about to be introduced, will show how well the head of the firm was pleased with this wild bargain. At the moment when his head was giddy with the popular applauses of the new-launched Nigel —and although he had been informed that *Peveril of the Peak* was already on the stocks—he suggested that a little pinnace, of the Halidon class, might easily be rigged out once a-quarter, by way of diversion, and thus add another £4000 per annum to the

£10,000 or £15,000, on which all parties counted as the sure yearly profit of the three-deckers *in fore.*

Before I quote Constable's effusion, however, I must recall to the reader's recollection some very gratifying, but I am sure perfectly sincere, laudation of him in his professional capacity, which the Author of the Fortunes of Nigel had put into the mouth of his Captain Clutterbuck in the humorous Epistle Introductory to that Novel. After alluding, in affectionate terms, to the recent death of John Ballantyne, the Captain adds,—"To this great deprivation has been added, I trust for a time only, the loss of another bibliopolical friend, whose vigorous intellect, and liberal ideas, have not only rendered his native country the mart of her own literature, but established there a court of letters, which must command respect, even from those most inclined to dissent from many of its canons. The effect of these changes, operated in a great measure by the strong sense and sagacious calculations of an individual, who knew how to avail himself, to an unhoped for extent, of the various kinds of talent which his country produced, will probably appear more clearly to the generation which shall follow the present. I entered the shop at the Cross to enquire after the health of my worthy friend, and learned with satisfaction that his residence in the south had abated the rigour of the symptoms of his disorder."

It appears that Nigel was published on the 30th of

May 1822; and next day Constable writes as follows from his temporary residence near London:—

"*To Sir Walter Scott, Bart., Castle Street, Edinburgh.*

"Castlebeare Park, 31st May 1822.

"Dear Sir Walter,

"I have received the highest gratification from the perusal of a certain new work. I may indeed say new work, for it is entirely so, and will, if that be possible, eclipse in popularity all that has gone before it.

"The Author will be blamed for one thing, however unreasonably, and that is, for concluding the story without giving his readers a little more of it. We are a set of ungrateful mortals. For one thing at least I trust I am never to be found so, for I must ever most duly appreciate the kind things intended to be applied to me in the Introductory Epistle to this work. I learn with astonishment, but not less delight, that the press is at work again; the title, which has been handed to me, is quite excellent.

"I am now so well as to find it compatible to pay my respects to some of my old haunts in the metropolis, where I go occasionally. I was in town yesterday, and so keenly were the people devouring my friend *Jingling Geordie*, that I actually saw them reading it in the streets as they passed along. I assure

you there is no exaggeration in this. A new novel from the author of Waverley puts aside—in other words, puts down for the time, every other literary performance. The Smack Ocean, by which the new work was shipped, arrived at the wharf on Sunday: the bales were got out by *one* on Monday morning, and before half-past ten o'clock 7000 copies had been dispersed from 90 Cheapside.* I sent my secretary on purpose to witness the activity with which such things are conducted, and to bring me the account, gratifying certainly, which I now give you.

"I went yesterday to the shop of a curious person—Mr Swaby, in Wardour-street—to look at an old portrait which my son, when lately here, mentioned to me. It is, I think, a portrait of *James the Fourth*, and if not an original, is doubtless a picture as early as his reign. Our friend Mr Thomson has seen it, and is of the same opinion; but I purpose that you should be called upon to decide this nice point, and I have ordered it to be forwarded to you, trusting that ere long I may see it in the Armoury at Abbotsford.

"I found at the same place two large elbow-chairs, elaborately carved, in boxwood—with figures, foliage, &c. perfectly entire. Mr Swaby, from whom I purchased them, assured me they came from the Borghese Palace at Rome; he possessed originally ten

* Constable's London agents, Messrs Hurst, Robinson, and Co., and then their premises in Cheapside.

such chairs, and had sold six of them to the Duke of Rutland, for Belvoir Castle, where they will be appropriate furniture; the two which I have obtained would, I think, not be less so in the Library of Abbotsford.

"I have been so fortunate as to secure a still more curious article—a slab of mosaic pavement, quite entire and large enough to make an outer hearthstone, which I also destine for Abbotsford. It occurred to me that these three articles might prove suitable to your taste, and under that impression I am now induced to take the liberty of requesting you to accept them as a small but sincere pledge of grateful feeling. Our literary connexion is too important to make it necessary for your publishers to trouble you about the pounds, shillings, and pence of such things; and I therefore trust you will receive them on the footing I have thus taken the liberty to name. I have been on the outlook for antique carvings, and if I knew the purposes for which you would want such, I might probably be able to send you some.

"I was truly happy to hear of 'Halidon Hill,' and of the satisfactory arrangements made for its publication. I wish I had the power of prevailing with you to give us a similar production every three months; and that our ancient enemies on this side the Border might not have too much their own way, perhaps your next dramatic sketch might be Ban-

nockburn.* It would be presumptuous in me to point out subjects, but you know my craving to be great, and I cannot resist mentioning here that I should like to see a Battle of Hastings—a Cressy—a Bosworth Field—and many more.

"Sir Thomas Lawrence was so kind as invite me to see his pictures,—what an admirable portrait he has commenced of you!—he has altogether hit a happy and interesting expression. I do not know whether you have heard that there is an exhibition at Leeds this year. I had an application for the use of Raeburn's picture, which is now there; and it stands No. 1 in the catalogue, of which I inclose you a copy.

"You will receive with this a copy of the 'Poetry, original and selected.' I have, I fear, overshot the mark by including the poetry of the Pirate, a liberty for which I must hope to be forgiven. The publication of the volume will be delayed ten days, in case you should do me the favour to suggest any alteration in the advertisement, or other change. —I have the honour to be, dear Sir Walter, your faithful humble servant,

ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE."

The last paragraph of this letter alludes to a little volume, into which Constable had collected the songs,

* Had Mr Constable quite forgotten the Lord of the Isles?

mottoes, and other scraps of verse scattered over Scott's Novels, from Waverley to the Pirate. It had a considerable run; and had it appeared sooner, might have saved Mr Adolphus the trouble of writing an essay to prove that the Author of Waverley, whoever he might be, was a Poet.

Constable, during his residence in England at this time, was in the habit of writing every week or two to Sir Walter, and his letters now before me are all of the same complexion as the preceding specimen. The ardent bookseller's brain seems to have been well-nigh unsettled at this period; and I have often thought that the foxglove which he then swallowed (his complaint being a threatening of water in the chest) might have had a share in the extravagant excitement of his mind. Occasionally, however, he enters on details as to which, or at least as to Sir Walter's share in them, there could not have been any mistake; and these were, it must be owned, of a nature well calculated to nourish and sustain in the author's fancy a degree of almost mad exhilaration, near akin to his publisher's own predominant mood. In a letter of the ensuing month, for example, after returning to the progress of Peveril of the Peak, under 10,000 copies of which (or nearly that number) Ballantyne's presses were now groaning, and glancing gaily to the prospect of their being kept regularly employed to the same extent until three other novels, as yet unchristened, had followed Pe-

veril, he adds a summary of what was then, had just been, or was about to be, the amount of occupation furnished to the same office by reprints of older works of the same pen;—"a summary," he exclaims, "to which I venture to say there will be no rival in our day!" And well might Constable say so; for the result is, that James Ballantyne and Co. had just executed, or were on the eve of executing, by his order—

"A new edition of Sir W. Scott's Poetical Works, in 10 vols. (miniature), . 5000 copies.
"Novels and Tales, 12 vols. ditto, 5000 —
"Historical Romances, 6 vols. ditto, 5000 —
"Poetry from Waverley, &c. 1 vol. 12mo, 5000 —
"Paper required, . . . 7772 reams.
"Volumes produced from Ballantyne's press, ... 145,000!"

To which we may safely add from 30,000 to 40,000 volumes more as the immediate produce of the author's daily industry within the space of twelve months. The scale of these operations was, without question, enough to turn any bookseller's wits;—Constable's, in its soberest hours, was as inflammable a head-piece as ever sat on the shoulders of a poet; and his ambition, in truth, had been moving *pari passu*, during several of these last stirring and turmoiling years, with that of *his* poet. He, too, as I

ought to have mentioned ere now, had, like a true Scotchman, concentrated his dreams on the hope of bequeathing to his heir the name and dignity of a lord of acres. He, too, had considerably before this time purchased a landed estate in his native county of Fife; he, too, I doubt not, had, while Abbotsford was rising, his own rural castle *in petto;* and alas! for "Archibald Constable of Balniel" also, and his overweening intoxication of wordly success, Fortune had already begun to prepare a stern rebuke.

Nigel was, I need not say, considered as ranking in the first class of Scott's romances. Indeed, as a historical portraiture, his of James I. stands forth pre-eminent, and almost alone; nor, perhaps, in re-perusing these novels deliberately as a series, does any one of them leave so complete an impression as the picture of an age. It is, in fact, the best commentary on the old English drama—hardly a single picturesque point of manners touched by Ben Jonson and his contemporaries but has been dovetailed into this story, and all so easily and naturally, as to form the most striking contrast to the historical romances of authors who *cram*, as the schoolboys phrase it, and then set to work oppressed and bewildered with their crude and undigested burden.

The novel was followed in June by the dramatic sketch of Halidon Hill; but that had far inferior success. I shall say a word on it presently, in connexion with another piece of the same order.

A few weeks before this time, Cornet Scott had sailed for Germany, and, it seems, in the midst of rough weather — his immediate destination being Berlin, where his father's valued friend Sir George Rose was then Ambassador from the Court of St James's:—

"*For Walter Scott, Esq.*

(*Care of His Excellency Sir George Rose, &c. &c., Berlin.*)

"My Dear Walter,

"Your letters came both together this morning, and relieved me from a disagreeable state of anxiety about you, for the winds have been tremendous since you sailed; and no news arriving from the Continent, owing to their sticking in the west, I was really very uneasy. Luckily mamma did not take any alarm. I have no news to send you, save what are agreeable. We are well here, and going on in the old fashion. Last night Mathews the comedian was with us, and made himself very entertaining. About a week ago the Comtesse Nial, a lady in the service of Princess Louisa of Prussia, came to dine here with the Lord Chief Commissioner and family, and seemed to take a great interest in what she heard and saw of our Scottish fashions. She was so good as to offer me letters for you to the Princess Louisa; General Gneissenau, who was Adjutant-General of Blucher's army, and formed the

plan of almost all the veteran's campaigns; and to the Baroness de la Motte Fouquè, who is distinguished in the world of letters, as well as her husband the Baron, the author of many very pleasing works of fiction, particularly the beautiful tale of Undine, and the travels of Theodulph. If you find an opportunity to say to the Baroness how much I have been interested by her writings and Mons. de la Motte Fouquè's, you will say no more than the truth, and it will be civil, for folks like to know that they are known and respected beyond the limits of their own country.

"Having the advantage of good introductions to foreigners of distinction, I hope you will not follow the established English fashion of herding with your countrymen, and neglecting the opportunity of extending your acquaintance with the language and society. There is, I own, a great temptation to this in a strange country; but it is destruction of all the purposes for which the expense and trouble of foreign travel are incurred. Labour particularly at the German, as the French can be acquired elsewhere; but I should rather say, work hard at both. It is not, I think, likely, though it is possible, that you may fall into company with some of the *Têtes échauffées*, who are now so common in Germany—men that would pull down the whole political system in order to rebuild it on a better model: a proposal about as wild as that of a man who should propose

to change the bridle of a furious horse, and commence his labours by slipping the headstall in the midst of a heath. Prudence, as well as principle and my earnest desire, will induce you to avoid this class of politicians, who, I know, are always on the alert to kidnap young men.

"I account Sir George Rose's being at Berlin the most fortunate circumstance which could have befallen you, as you will always have a friend whom you can consult in case of need. Do not omit immediately arranging your time so as to secure as much as possible for your studies and exercises. For the last I recommend fencing and riding in the academy; for though a good horseman, it is right you should keep up the habit, and many of the German schools are excellent. I think, however, Sir George Rose says that of Berlin is but indifferent; and he is a good judge of the art. I pray you not to lose time in dawdling; for, betwixt Edinburgh, London, and the passage, much of the time which our plan destined for your studies has been consumed, and your return into the active service of your profession is proportionally delayed; so lose no time. I cannot say but what I am very happy that you are not engaged in the inglorious, yet dangerous and harassing, warfare of Ireland at present. Your old friend Paddy is now stark mad, and doing much mischief. Sixteen of the Peelers have, I see by this morning's papers, been besieged in their quarters by

the mob, four killed, and the rest obliged to surrender after they had fired the house in which they were quartered. The officers write that the service is more harassing than on the Peninsula, and it would appear a considerable part of the country is literally in possession of the insurgents. You are just as well learning *Teütsche sprechen.* I am glad to see you are writing a firm and good hand. Your last from Hamburgh was distinctly written, and well composed. Pray write all your remarks, and pay some little attention to the style, which, without being stiff or pedantic, should always be accurate.

"The Lockharts are well; but baby has a cough, which keeps Sophia anxious; they cannot say whether it be the hooping-cough or no. Mamma, Anne, and little Walter* send kind love. The little fellow studies hard, and will, I hope, be a credit to the name he bears. If you do not take care, he may be a General before you. Always, my dear Walter, most affectionately yours, WALTER SCOTT.

"P. S. — The Germans are a people of form. You will take care to learn the proper etiquette about delivering the enclosed letters."

* Walter, the son of Mr. Thomas Scott, was at this time domiciled with his uncle's family.

CHAPTER LVI.

Repairs of Melrose Abbey — Letters to Lord Montagu and Miss Edgeworth — King George IV. visits Scotland — Celtic mania — Mr Crabbe in Castle Street — Death of Lord Kinnedder — Departure of the King — Letters from Mr Peel and Mr Croker.

1822.

ABOUT this time Scott's thoughts were much occupied with a plan for securing Melrose Abbey against the progress of decay, which had been making itself manifest to an alarming extent, and to which he had often before directed the attention of the Buccleuch family. Even in writing to persons who had never seen Melrose, he could not help touching on this business — for he wrote, as he spoke, out of the fulness of the heart. The young Duke readily concurred with his guardians in allowing the poet

to direct such repairs as might seem to him adequate; and the result was extremely satisfactory to all the habitual worshippers of these classical ruins.

I return to the copious and candid correspondence from which it has been throughout my object to extract and combine the scattered fragments of an *autobiography*.

"*To Miss Edgeworth, Edgeworthstown.*

"Abbotsford, 24th April 1822.

"My Dear Miss Edgeworth,

"I am extremely sorry indeed that you cannot fulfil your kind intentions to be at Abbotsford this year. It is a great disappointment, and I am grieved to think it should have arisen from the loss of a valued relation. That is the worst part of life, when its earlier path is trod. If my limbs get stiff, my walks are made shorter and my rides slower — if my eyes fail me, I can use glasses and a large print — if I get a little deaf, I comfort myself that, except in a few instances, I shall be no great loser by missing one full half of what is spoken; but I feel the loneliness of age when my companions and friends are taken from me. The sudden death of both the Boswells, and the bloody end of the last, have given me great pain.* You have never got half the praise

* James Boswell of the Temple, editor of the last Variorum Shakespeare, &c., a man of considerable learning and admirable

Vivian ought to have procured you. The reason is, that the class from which the excellent portrait was drawn, feel the resemblance too painfully to thank the author for it; and I do not believe the common readers understand it in the least. I, who (thank God) am neither great man nor politician, have lived enough among them to recognise the truth and nature of the painting, and am no way implicated in the satire. I begin to think, that of the three kingdoms the English alone are qualified to mix in politics safely and without fatal results; the fierce and hasty resentments of the Irish, and the sullen, long-enduring, revengeful temper of my countrymen, make such agitations have a much wider and more dreadful effect amongst them. Well, we will forget

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social qualities, died suddenly, in the prime of life, about a fortnight before his brother Sir Alexander. Scott was warmly attached to them both, and the fall of the Baronet might well give him a severe shock, for he had dined in Castle Street only two or three days before it occurred, and the merriest tones of his voice were still ringing in his friend's ears when he received the fatal intelligence. That evening was, I think, the gayest I ever spent in Castle Street; and though Charles Mathews was present, and in his best force, poor Boswell's songs, jokes, and anecdotes, had exhibited no symptom of eclipse. It turned out that he had joined the party whom he thus delighted, immediately after completing the last arrangements for his duel. It may be worth while to add, that several circumstances of his death are *exactly* reproduced in the duel scene of St. Ronan's Well.

what we cannot help, and pray that we may lose no more friends till we find, as I hope and am sure we shall do, friends in each other. I had arranged to stay at least a month after the 12th of May, in hopes of detaining you at Abbotsford, and I will not let you off under a month or two the next year. I shall have my house completed, my library replaced, my armoury new furbished, my piper new clothed, and the time shall be July. I trust I may have the same family about me, and perhaps my two sons. Walter is at Berlin studying the great art of war — and entertaining a most military conviction that all the disturbances of Ireland are exclusively owing to his last regiment, the 18th hussars, having been imprudently reduced. Little Charles is striving to become a good scholar, and fit for Oxford. Both have a chance of being at home in autumn 1823. I know nothing I should wish you to see which has any particular chance of becoming invisible in the course of fourteen months, excepting my old bloodhound, poor fellow, on whom age now sits so heavily, that he cannot follow me far from the house. I wished you to see him very much — he is of that noble breed which Ireland, as well as Scotland, once possessed, and which is now almost extinct in both countries. I have sometimes thought of the final cause of dogs having such short lives, and I am quite satisfied it is in compassion to the human race; for if we suffer so much in losing a dog after an acquaintance of ten

or twelve years, what would it be if they were to live double that time?

"I don't propose being in London this year—I do not like it—there is such a riding and driving—so much to see—so much to say—not to mention plover's eggs and champaign—that I always feel tob much excited in London,—though it is good to rub off the rust too, sometimes, and brings you up abreast with the world as it goes——But I must break off, being summoned to a conclave to examine how the progress of decay, which at present threatens to destroy the ruins of Melrose, can yet be arrested. The Duke of Buccleuch, though but a boy, is very desirous to have something done, and his guardians have acquiesced in a wish so reasonable and creditable to the little chief. I only hope they will be liberal, for a trifle will do no good—or rather, I think, any partial tampering is likely to do harm. But the Duke has an immense estate, and I hope they will remember, that though a moderate sum may keep up this national monument, yet his whole income could not replace it should it fall.—Yours, dear Miss Edgeworth, with true respect and regard,

WALTER SCOTT."

"*To the Lord Montagu, &c.*

"Abbotsford, 29th April 1822.

"My Dear Lord,

"The state of the east window is peculiarly

precarious, and it may soon give way if not assisted. There would not only be dishonour in that, as Trinculo says when he lost his bottle in the pool,* but an infinite loss. Messrs Smallwood and Smith concur, there will be no difficulty in erecting a scaffolding strong enough to support the weight of an interior arch, or *beam*, as we call it, of wood, so as to admit the exterior two rows of the stone-arch to be lifted and replaced, stone by stone, and made as sure as ever they were. The other ribs should then be pointed both above and beneath, every fissure closed, every tree and shrub eradicated, and the whole arch covered with Roman cement, or, what would be greatly better, with lead. This operation relates to the vault over the window. Smallwood thinks that the window itself, that is, the shafted columns, should be secured by renewing the cross-irons which formerly combined them together laterally, and the holes of which still remain; and, indeed, considering how it has kept its ground in its present defenceless state, I think it amounts to a certainty that the restoration of so many *points d'appui* will secure it against any tempest whatsoever, especially when the vaulted roof is preserved from the present risk of falling down on it.

" There is one way in which the expense would be greatly lessened, and the appearance of the build-

* *Tempest, Act IV. Scene* 1.

ing in the highest degree improved, but it depends on a *proviso*. Provided, then, that the whole eastern window, with the vaults above it, were repaired and made, as Law says, *sartum atque tectum*, there could be no objection to taking down the modern roof with the clumsy buttresses on the northern side.* Indeed I do not see how the roof's continuing could in any respect protect the window, though it may be very doubtful whether the west gable should be pulled down, which would expose the east window to a thorough draft of air, a circumstance which the original builder did not contemplate, and against which, therefore, he made no provision. The taking down this roof and the beastly buttresses would expose a noble range of columns on each side. Ever, my dear Lord, yours ever truly, W. S."

"*To the Same.*

"Abbotsford, 15th May 1822.

My Dear Lord,

"I am quite delighted with the commencement of the Melrose repairs, and hope to report progress before I leave the country, though that must be on Monday next. Please God, I will be on the roof of

* Some time after the disciples of John Knox had done their savage pleasure upon Melrose Abbey, the western part of the chancel was repaired in a most clumsy style to serve as a parish kirk.

the old Abbey myself when the scaffolding is up. When I was a boy I could climb like a wild-cat; and entire affection to the work on hand must on this occasion counterbalance the disadvantages of increased weight and stiffened limbs. The east and south window certainly claim the preference in any repairs suggested; the side aisles are also in a very bad way, but cannot in this summer weather be the worse of delay. It is the rain that finds its way betwixt the arch-stones in winter, and is there arrested by the frost, which ruins ancient buildings when exposed to wet. Ice occupies more space than water unfrozen, and thus, when formed, operates as so many wedges inserted between the stones of the arch, which, of course, are dislocated by this interposition, and in process of time the equilibrium of the arch is destroyed—Q. E. D. There spoke the President of the R. S. E. The removal of the old roof would not be attended with a penny of expense—nay, might be a saving, were it thought proper to replace the flags which now cover it upon the side aisles, where they certainly originally lay. The ruble stones would do much more than pay the labourers. But though this be the case, and though the beauty of the ruin would be greatly increased, still I should first like to be well assured that the east window was not thereby deprived of shelter. It is to be seriously weighed that the architect, who has shown so much skill, would not fail to modify the strength of the different

parts of his building to the violence which they were to sustain; and as it never entered into his pious pate that the east window was to be exposed to a thorough blast from west to east, it is possible he may not have constructed it of strength sufficient to withstand its fury; and therefore I say caution, caution.

"We are not like to suffer on this occasion the mortification incurred by my old friend and kinsman Mr Keith of Ravelstone, a most excellent man, but the most irresolute in the world, more especially when the question was unloosing his purse-strings. Conceiving himself to represent the great Earls-Marischal, and being certainly possessed of their castle and domains, he bethought him of the family vault, a curious Gothic building in the churchyard of Dunnottar: £10, it was reported, would do the job—my good friend proffered £5—it would not do. Two years after he offered the full sum. A report was sent that the breaches were now so much increased that £20 would scarce serve. Mr Keith humm'd and ha'd for three years more; then offered £20. The wind and rain had not waited his decision—less than £50 would not now serve. A year afterwards he sent a cheque for the £50, which was returned by post, with the pleasing intelligence that the Earl-Marischal's aisle had fallen the preceding week. Your Lordship's prompt decision has probably saved Melrose Abbey from the same fate. I pro-

test I often thought I was looking on it for the last time.

"I do not know how I could write in such a slovenly way as to lead your Lordship to think that I could recommend planting even the fertile soil of Bowden-moor in the month of April or May. Except evergreens, I would never transplant a tree betwixt March and Martinmas. Indeed I hold by the old proverb—plant a tree before Candlemas, and *command* it to grow—plant it after Candlemas, and you must *entreat* it. I only spoke of this as a thing which you might look at when your Lordship came here; and so your ideas exactly meet mine.

"I think I can read Lady Montagu's dream, or your Lordship's, or my own, or our common vision, without a Daniel coming to judgment, for I bethink me my promise related to some Botany Bay seeds, &c., sent me in gratitude by an honest gentleman who had once run some risk of being himself pendulous on a tree in this country. If they come to anything pretty, we shall be too proud to have some of the produce at Ditton.

"Your hailstones have visited us—mingled, in Scripture phrase, with coals of fire. My uncle, now ninety-three years complete, lives in the house of Monklaw, where the offices were set on fire by the lightning. The old gentleman was on foot, and as active with his orders and directions as if he had been but forty-five. They wished to get him off,

but he answered, 'Na, na, lads, I have faced mony a fire in my time, and I winna turn my back on this ane.' Was not this a good cut of an old Borderer? —Ever your Lordship's faithful W. SCOTT."

In the next of these letters Sir Walter refers to the sudden death of the excellent Primate of Ireland, the Honourable William Stuart, brother to his and Lord Montagu's dear friend Lady Louisa. His Grace appears to have been cut off in consequence of an over-dose of laudanum being accidentally administered to him

"*To the Same.*

"Edinburgh, 24th May 1822.

"I do devoutly grieve for poor Lady Louisa. With a mind, and indeed a bodily frame, which suffers so peculiarly as hers under domestic affliction, I think she has had a larger share of it than any person almost in my acquaintance. Perhaps, in her case, celibacy, by extending the affections of so kind a heart through the remoter range of relationship, has rendered her more liable to such inroads upon her happiness. I remember several accidents similar to that of the Archbishop of Armagh. Henderson's (the player) was one. His wife, who administered the fatal draught, was the only person who remained ignorant of the cause of his death. One of the

Duke's farmers, some years since, showed extraordinary resolution in the same situation. His father had given him a quantity of laudanum instead of some other medicine. The mistake was instantly discovered; but the young man had sufficient energy and force of mind to combat the operation of the drug. While all around him were stupid with fear, he rose, saddled his horse, and rode to Selkirk (six or seven miles;) thus saving the time that the doctor must have taken in coming to him. It is very curious that his agony of mind was able to suspend the operation of the drug until he had alighted, when it instantly began to operate. He recovered perfectly.

"Much obliged by the communication of the symbols adopted by the lady patronesses at the ball for the Scottish Corporation. Some seem very apocryphal. I have somewhere two lists of the badges of the Highland clans, which do not quite correspond with each other. I suppose they sometimes shifted their symbols. In general, it was a rule to have an evergreen; and I have heard that the downfall of the Stuarts was supposed to be omened by their having chosen the oak for their badge of distinction. I have always heard that of the Scotts was the heath-flower, and that they were sometimes called *Heather-tops* from that circumstance. There is a rhyme in Satchells or elsewhere, which runs thus:—

" If heather-bells were corn of the best,
Buccleuch-mill would have a noble grist."

In the Highlands I used sometimes to put heath in my hat, and was always welcomed as a kinsman by the Macdonalds, whose badge is *freugh*, or heather. By the way, Glengarry has had an affair with a cow, in which, rumour says, he has not come off quite so triumphantly as Guy of Warwick in an incident of the same nature. Lord pity them that should mention Tom Thumb.—Yours ever, W. S."

In the following he touches, among other things, on a strange book, called *Cranbourne Chase*,* the performance of a clergyman mad upon sport, which had been sent to him by his friend William Rose; —the anniversary of the battle of Waterloo, as celebrated by him and his rural allies at Melrose; —a fire which had devastated the New Forest, in the neighbourhood of Lord Montagu's seat of Beaulieu Abbey;—and the annual visit to Blair-Adam, which suggested the subject of another dramatic sketch, thus of *Macduff's Cross*.

* " Anecdotes of Cranbourne Chase, &c., by William Chafin, clerk: 2d edition. Nichols, London 1818,"—a thin 8vo. Our Sporting Library, a rich and curious one, does not include anything more entertaining than Mr. Chafin's little volume: and I am sorry Sir Walter never redeemed his promise to make it the subject of an article in the Quarterly Review.

"*To the Same.*

"Edinburgh, June 23, 1822.

"I am glad your Lordship likes Cranbourne Chase: if you had not, I should have been mortified in my self-conceit, for I thought you were exactly the person to relish it. If you bind it, pray insert at the beginning or end two or three leaves of blank paper, that I may insert some excellent anecdotes of the learned author, which I got from good authority. His *debût* in the sporting line was shooting an old cat, for which crime his father made him do penance upon bread and water for three months in a garret, where he amused himself with hunting rats upon a new principle. Is not this being game to the backbone?

"I expect to be at Abbotsford for two days about the 18th, that I may hold a little jollification with the inhabitants of Melrose and neighbourhood, who always have a gaudeamus, like honest men, on the anniversary of Waterloo. I shall then see what is doing at the Abbey. I am very tenaciously disposed to think, that when the expense of scaffolding, &c. is incurred, it would be very desirable to complete the thing by covering the arch with lead, which will secure it for 500 years. I doubt compositions standing our evil climate; and then the old story of vegetation taking place among the stones comes round

again, and twenty years put it in as much danger as before. To be sure, the lead will not look so picturesque as cement, but then the preservation will be complete and effectual.

The fire in Bewly forest reminds me of a pine wood in Strathspey taking fire, which threatened the most destructive consequences to the extensive forests of the Laird of Grant. He sent the *fiery cross* (then peculiarly appropriate, and the last time, it is said, that it was used) through Glen-Urquhart and all its dependencies, and assembled five hundred Highlanders with axes, who could only stop the conflagration by cutting a gap of 500 yards in width betwixt the burning wood and the rest of the forest. This occurred about 1770, and must have been a most tremendous scene.

" Adam Fergusson and I spent Saturday, Sunday, and Monday last, in scouring the country with the Chief Baron and Chief Commissioner in search of old castles, crosses, and so forth; and the pleasant weather rendered the excursion delightful. The beasts of Reformers have left only the bottom-stone or socket of Macduff's Cross, on which is supposed to have been recorded the bounty of King Malcolm Canmore to the unborn Thane of Fife. It was a comfort, however, to have seen anything of it at all. As to your being in Bond Street, I can only say I pity you with all my heart. Castle Street is bad enough, even with the privilege of a hop-step-

and-jump to Abbotsford, by way of shoemakers' holiday.

"I shall be delighted to hear that Lady Charlotte's bridal has taken place;* and as doubtless she destines a pair of gloves to one of her oldest friends and well-wishers, I hope her Ladyship will not allow the awful prospect before her to put out of her recollection that I have the largest pair of hands almost in Scotland (now that Hugh Warrender is gone), and that if there be seven-leagued gloves, as once there were seven-leagued boots, they will be most 'germain to the matter.' My respectful compliments to the bride-elect and her sisters, to Lady Montagu, and your own young ladies. I have scarce room to add, that I always am your Lordship's very faithful

WALTER SCOTT."

On the 12th of July, Sir Walter, as usual, left Edinburgh, but he was recalled within a week, by the business to which the following note refers—

"*To D. Terry, Esq., London.*

"Edinburgh, 31st July 1822.

"My Dear Terry,

"I have not a moment to think my own

* Lady Charlotte Scott, sister to the present Duke of Buccleuch, was married about this time to her cousin Lord Stopford, now Earl of Courtown.

thoughts, or mind my own matters: would you were here, for we are in a famous perplexity: the motto on the St Andrew's Cross, to be presented to the King, is '*Righ Albainn gu brath*,' that is, 'Long Life to the King of Scotland.' '*Righ gu brath*' would make a good motto for a button — 'the King for ever.' I wish to have Montrose's sword down with the speed of light, as I have promised to let my cousin, the Knight-Marshal, have it on this occasion. Pray send it down by the mail-coach: I can add no more, for the whole of this work has devolved on my shoulders. If Montrose's sword is not quite finished, send it nevertheless.* — Yours entirely,

W SCOTT."

We have him here in the hot bustle of preparation for King George the Fourth's reception in

* There is in the armoury at Abbotsford a sword presented by Charles I. to the great Marquis of Montrose — with Prince Henry's arms and cypher on one side of the blade, and his own on the other. Sir Walter had sent it to Terry for a new sheath. 1837.

One day at Dalkeith, during the King's visit, the late Duke of Montrose happened to sit next to Sir Walter, and complimented him on the vigorous muster of Border Yeomanry which Portobello Sands had exhibited that morning. "Indeed," said Scott, "there's scarcely a man left to guard our homesteads." — "I've a great mind," quoth the Duke, "to send a detachment of my tail to Abbotsford to make prize of my ancestor's sword." — "Your Grace," says Sir Walter, drily, "is very welcome to try — but we're near Philiphaugh yonder." 1839.

Scotland, where his Majesty spent a fortnight in the ensuing August, as he had a similar period in Ireland the year before, immediately after his coronation. Before this time no Prince of the House of Hanover was known to have touched the soil of Scotland, except one, whose name had ever been held there in universal destestation — the cruel conqueror of Culloden, — "the butcher Cumberland." Now that the very last dream of Jacobitism had expired with the Cardinal of York, there could be little doubt that all the northern Tories, of whatever shade of sentiment, would concur to give their lawful Sovereign a greeting of warm and devoted respect; but the feelings of the Liberals towards George IV. personally had been unfavourably tinctured, in consequence of several incidents in his history — above all — (speaking of the mass of population addicted to that political creed) — the unhappy dissensions and scandals which had terminated, as it were but yesterday, in the trial of his Queen. The recent asperities of the political press on both sides, and some even fatal results to which these had led, must also be taken into account. On the whole it was, in the opinion of cool observers, a very doubtful experiment, which the new, but not young King, had resolved on trying. That he had been moved to do so in a very great measure, both directly and indirectly, by Scott, there can be no question; and I believe it will now be granted by all who can recall the particulars as they occurred, that

his Majesty mainly owed to Scott's personal influence, authority, and zeal, the more than full realization of the highest hopes he could have indulged on the occasion of this northern progress.

Whether all the arrangements which Sir Walter dictated or enforced, were conceived in the most accurate taste, is a different question. It appeared to be very generally thought, when the first programmes were issued, that the Highlanders, their kilts, and their bagpipes, were to occupy a great deal too much space in every scene of public ceremony connected with the King's reception. With all respect and admiration for the noble and generous qualities which our countrymen of the Highland clans have so often exhibited, it was difficult to forget that they had always constituted a small, and almost always an unimportant part of the Scottish population; and when one reflected how miserably their numbers had of late years been reduced in consequence of the selfish and hard-hearted policy of their landlords, it almost seemed as if there was a cruel mockery in giving so much prominence to their pretensions. But there could be no question that they were picturesque—and their enthusiasm was too sincere not to be catching; so that by and by even the coolest-headed Sassenach felt his heart, like John of Argyle's, "warm to the tartan;" and high and low were in the humour, not only to applaud, but each, according to his

station, to take a share in what might really be described as a sort of grand *terryfication* of the Holyrood chapters in Waverley; George IV., *anno ætatis* 60, being well contented to enact "Prince Charlie," with the Great Unknown himself for his Baron Bradwardine, "*ad exuendas vel detrahendas caligas domini regis post battalliam.*"

But Sir Walter had as many parts to play as ever tasked the Protean genius of his friend Mathews; and he played them all with as much cordial energy as animated the exertions of any Henchman or Piper in the company. His severest duties, however, were those of stage-manager, and under these I sincerely believe any other human being's temper and patience would very soon have given way. The local magistrates, bewildered and perplexed with the rush of novelty, threw themselves on him for advice and direction about the merest trifles; and he had to arrange everything, from the ordering of a procession to the cut of a button and the embroidering of a cross. Ere the green-room in Castle Street had dismissed provosts, and bailies, and deacon-conveners of the trades of Edinburgh, it was sure to be besieged by swelling chieftains, who could not agree on the relative positions their clans had occupied at Bannockburn, which they considered as constituting the authentic precedent for determining their own places, each at the head of his little theatrical *tail*, in the line of the King's escort between the Pier of Leith

and the Canongate. It required all Scott's unwearied good-humour, and imperturbable power of face, to hear in becoming gravity the sputtering controversies of such fiery rivals, each regarding himself as a true potentate, the representative of Princes as ancient as Bourbon; and no man could have coaxed them into decent co-operation, except him whom all the Highlanders, from the haughtiest MacIvor to the slyest Callum-Beg, agreed in looking up to as the great restorer and blazoner of their traditionary glories. He had, however, in all this most delicate part of his administration, an admirable assistant in one who had also, by the direction of his literary talents, acquired no mean share of authority among the Celts — namely, the late General David Stewart of Garth, author of the "History of the Highland Regiments." On Garth (seamed all over with the scars of Egypt and Spain) devolved the Toy-Captainship of the *Celtic Club*, already alluded to as an association of young civilians, enthusiastic for the promotion of the philabeg — and he drilled and conducted that motley array in such style, that they formed, perhaps, the most splendid feature in the whole of this plaided panorama. But he, too, had a potential voice in the conclave of rival chieftains, — and, with the able backing of this honoured veteran, Scott succeeded finally in assuaging all their heats, and reducing their conflicting pretensions to terms of truce, at least, and compromise. A ballad (now included in his works), wherein these

magnates were most adroitly flattered, was widely circulated among them and their followers, and was understood to have had a considerable share of the merit in this peace-making; but the constant hospitality of his table was a not less efficient organ of influence. A friend coming in upon him as a detachment of Duniewassails were enjoying, for the first time, his "Cogie now the King's Come," in his breakfast parlour, could not help whispering in his ear—"Your are just your own Lindesay in Marmion—*still thy verse hath charms;*"—and indeed, almost the whole of the description thus referred to might have been applied to him when arranging the etiquettes of this ceremonial; for, among other persons in place and dignity who leaned to him for support on every question, was his friend and kinsman, the late worthy Sir Alexander Keith, Knight-Marischal of Scotland; and—

"Heralds and pursuivants, by name
Bute, Islay, Marchmont, Rothesay came,
Attendant on a king-at-arms,
Whose hand the armorial truncheon held,
That feudal strife had often quelled,
When wildest its alarms.
He was a man of middle age,
In aspect manly, grave, and sage,
As on King's errand come,
But in the glances of his eye,
A penetrating, keen, and sly
Expression found its home . . . . . .

Still is thy name in high account,
And still thy verse hath charms;
SIR DAVID LINDESAY OF THE MOUNT,
LORD LYON KING-AT-ARMS."*

About noon of the 14th of August, the royal yacht and the attendant vessels of war cast anchor in the Roads of Leith; but although Scott's ballad-prologue had entreated the clergy to "warstle for a sunny day," the weather was so unpropitious that it was found necessary to defer the landing until the 15th. In the midst of the rain, however, Sir Walter rowed off to the Royal George; and, says the newspaper of the day,—

"When his arrival alongside the yacht was announced to the King,—'What!' exclaimed his Majesty, 'Sir Walter Scott!—The man in Scotland I most wish to see! Let him come up.' This distinguished Baronet then ascended the ship, and was presented to the King on the quarter-deck, where, after an appropriate speech in name of the Ladies of Edinburgh, he presented his Majesty with a St. Andrew's Cross in silver, which his fair subjects had provided for him.† The King, with evident marks of satisfaction, made a gracious reply to Sir Walter, received the gift in the most kind and condescending manner, and promised to wear it in public, in token of acknowledgment to the fair donors.

To this record let me add, that, on receiving the poet on the quarter-deck, his Majesty called for a bottle of Highland whisky, and having drunk his health in this national liquor, desired a glass to be

* *Marmion, Canto IV. Stanzas* 6, 7.

† This was the cross inscribed "Righ Albainn gu brath," about which Scott wrote to Terry on the 31st July.

filled for him. Sir Walter, after draining his own bumper, made a request that the King would condescend to bestow on him the glass out of which his Majesty had just drunk his health; and this being granted, the precious vessel was immediately wrapped up and carefully deposited in what he conceived to be the safest part of his dress. So he returned with it to Castle Street; but—to say nothing at this moment of graver distractions—on reaching his house he found a guest established there of a sort rather different from the usual visiters of the time. The Poet Crabbe, to whom he had been introduced when last in London by Mr Murray of Albemarle Street, after repeatedly promising to follow up the acquaintance by an excursion to the north, had at last arrived in the midst of these tumultuous preparations for the royal advent. Notwithstanding all such impediments, he found his quarters ready for him, and Scott entering, wet and hurried, embraced the venerable man with brotherly affection. The royal gift was forgotten—the ample skirt of the coat within which it had been packed, and which he had hitherto held cautiously in front of his person, slipped back to its more usual position—he sat down beside Crabbe, and the glass was crushed to atoms. His scream and gesture made his wife conclude that he had sat down on a pair of scissors, or the like: but very little harm had been done except the breaking of the glass, of which alone he had been thinking. This was a da-

mage not to be repaired: as for the scratch that accompanied it, its scar was of no great consequence, as even when mounting the "*cat-dath*, or battle-garment" of the Celtic Club, he adhered, like his hero Waverley, to *the trews*.

By six o'clock next morning, Sir Walter, arrayed in the "Garb of old Gaul" (which he had of the Campbell tartan, in memory of one of his great grandmothers), was attending a muster of these gallant Celts in the Queen-Street Gardens, where he had the honour of presenting them with a set of colours, and delivered a suitable exhortation, crowned with their rapturous applause. Some members of the Club, all of course in their full costume, were invited to breakfast with him. He had previously retired for a little to his library, and when he entered the parlour, Mr Crabbe, dressed in the highest style of professional neatness and decorum, with buckles in his shoes, and whatever was then considered as befitting an English clergyman of his years and station, was standing in the midst of half-a-dozen stalwart Highlanders, exchanging elaborate civilities with them, in what was at least meant to be French. He had come into the room shortly before, without having been warned about such company, and hearing the party conversing together in an unknown tongue, the polite old man had adopted, in his first salutation, what he considered as the universal language. Some of the Celts, on their part, took him

for some foreign abbé or bishop, and were doing their best to explain to him that they were not the wild savages for which, from the startled glance he had thrown on their hirsute proportions, there seemed but too much reason to suspect he had taken them; others, more perspicacious, gave in to the thing for the joke's sake; and there was high fun when Scott dissolved the charm of their stammering, by grasping Crabbe with one hand, and the nearest of these figures with the other, and greeted the whole group with the same hearty *good-morning*.

Perhaps no Englishman of these recent days ever arrived in Scotland with a scantier stock of information about the country and the people than (judging, from all that he said, and more expressively looked) this illustrious poet had brought with him in August 1822. It seemed as if he had never for one moment conceived that the same island, in which his peaceful parsonage stood, contained actually a race of men, and gentlemen too, owning no affinity with Englishmen, either in blood or in speech, and still proud in wearing, whenever opportunity served, a national dress of their own, bearing considerably more resemblance to an American Indian's than to that of an old-fashioned rector from the Vale of Belvoir. His eyes were opened wide—but they were never opened in vain; and he soon began, if not to comprehend the machinery which his host had called into motion on this occasion, to sympathize at least very

warmly and amiably with all the enthusiasm that animated the novel spectacle before him.

I regret that, having been on duty with a troop of yeomanry cavalry on the 15th of August, I lost the opportunity of witnessing Mr Crabbe's demeanour when this magnificent scene was first fully revealed upon him. The whole aspect of the city and its vicinity was, in truth, as new to the inhabitants as it could have been even to the Rector of Muston:—every height and precipice occupied by military of the regular army, or by detachments of these more picturesque irregulars from beyond the Grampians—lines of tents, flags, and artillery, circling Arthur's Seat, Salisbury Crags, and the Calton Hill—and the old black Castle and its rock, wreathed in the smoke of repeated salvoes, while a huge banner-royal, such as had not waved there since 1745, floated and flapped over all:—every street, square, garden, or open space below, paved with solid masses of silent expectants, except only where glittering lines of helmets marked the avenue guarded for the approaching procession. All captiousness of criticism sunk into nothing before the grandeur of this vision: and it was the same, or nearly so, on every subsequent day when the King chose to take part in the devised ceremonial. I forget where Sir Walter's place was on the 15th; but on one or other of these occasions I remember him seated in an open carriage, in the Highland dress, armed and accoutred

as heroically as Garth himself (who accompanied him), and evidently in a most bardish state of excitement, while honest Peter Mathieson managed as best he might four steeds of a fierier sort than he had usually in his keeping — though perhaps, after all, he might be less puzzled with them than with the cocked-hat and regular London Jehu's flaxen wig, which he, for the first and last time, displayed during "the royal fortnight."

The first procession from Leith to Holyrood was marshalled in strict adherence, it must be admitted, to the poetical programme—

> "Lord! how the pibrochs groan and yell!
> Macdonnell's ta'en the field himsel',
> Macleod comes branking o'er the fell—
> Carle, now the King's come!"

But I must transcribe the newspaper record in its details, because no one could well believe, unless he had a specimen of these before him, the extent to which the Waverley and Rob Roy *animus* was allowed to pervade the whole of this affair.

"Three Trumpeters Mid-Lothian Yeomanry Cavalry.
Squadron Mid-Lothian Yeomanry.
Two Highland Pipers.
Captain Campbell, and Tail of Breadalbane.
Squadron Scots Greys.
Two Highland Pipers.
Colonel Stewart of Garth and Celtic Club.

Sir Evan M'Gregor mounted on horseback, and Tail of M'Gregor.
Herald mounted.
Marischal Trumpets mounted.
A Marischal Groom on foot.
Three Marischal Grooms abreast.
Two Grooms. { Six Marischal Esquires mounted, three abreast. } Two Grooms.
Henchman. Groom. { Knight Marischal mounted with his baton of office. } *Henchman.* Groom
Marischal rear-guard of Highlanders.
Sheriff mounted.
Sheriff-officers.
Deputy Lieutenants in green coats, mounted.
Two Pipers.
General Graham Stirling, and Tail.
Barons of Exchequer.
Lord Clerk Register.
Lords of Justiciary and Session, in carriages.
Marquis of Lothian, Lord Lieutenant, mounted.
Two Heralds, mounted.
Glengarry mounted, and Grooms.
Young Glengarry and two Supporters — Tail.
Four Herald Trumpeters.
White Rod, mounted, and Equerries.
Lord Lyon Depute, mounted, and Grooms.
Earl of Errol, Lord High Constable, mounted.
Two Heralds, mounted.
Squadron Scots Greys.
Royal Carriage and Six, in which were the Marquis of Graham, Vice-Chamberlain; Lord G. Beresford, Comptroller of the Household;
Lord C. Bentinck, Treasurer of the Household;
Sir R. H. Vivian, Equerry to the King; and two others of his Majesty's suite.
Ten Royal Footmen, two and two.
Sixteen Yeomen, two and two.

Archers. { THE KING, attended by the Duke of Dorset, Master of the Horse, and the Marquis of Winchester, Groom of the Stole. } Archers.

Sir Thomas Bradford and Staff.
Squadron Scots Greys.
Three Clans of Highlanders and Banners.
Two Squadrons of the Mid-Lothian Yeomanry.
Grenadiers of 77th regiment.
Two Squadrons Third Dragoon Guards.
Band, and Scots Greys.

It is, I believe, of the dinner of this 15th August in Castle Street, that Crabbe penned the following brief record in his Journal:—"Whilst it is fresh in my memory, I should describe the day which I have just passed, but I do not believe an accurate description to be possible. What avails it to say, for instance, that there met at the sumptuous dinner, in all the costume of the Highlanders, the great chief himself, and officers of his company. This expresses not the singularity of appearance and manners—the peculiarities of men all gentlemen, but remote from our society—leaders of clans—joyous company. Then we had Sir Walter Scott's national songs and ballads, exhibiting all the feelings of clanship. I thought it an honour that Glengarry even took notice of me, for there were those, and gentlemen too, who considered themselves honoured by following in his train. There were also Lord Errol, and the

Macleod, and the Fraser, and the Gordon, and the Fergusson;* and I conversed at dinner with Lady Glengarry, and did almost believe myself a harper, or bard, rather—for harp I cannot strike; and Sir Walter was the life and soul of the whole. It was a splendid festivity, and I felt I know not how much younger."—*Life of* CRABBE, p. 273.

* Sir Walter's friend, the Captain of Huntlyburn, did not, as far as I remember, sport the Highland dress on this occasion, but no doubt his singing of certain Jacobite songs, &c., contributed to make Crabbe set him down for the chief of a clan. Sir Adam, however, is a Highlander by descent, though the name, *Mac-Erries*, has been, for two or three generations, translated into *Fergusson*; and even his reverend and philosophical father had, on at least one remarkable occasion, exhibited the warmth of his Celtic blood in perfection. In his essay on the life of John Home, Scott says—"Dr Adam Fergusson went as chaplain to the Black Watch, or 42d Highland regiment, when that corps was first sent to the Continent. As the regiment advanced to the battle of Fontenoy, the commanding officer, Sir Robert Munro, was astonished to see the chaplain at the head of the column, with a broadsword drawn in his hand. He desired him to go to the rear with the surgeons, a proposal which Adam Fergusson spurned. Sir Robert at length told him, that his commission did not entitle him to be present in the post which he had assumed.—'D—n my commission,' said the warlike chaplain, throwing it towards his colonel. It may easily be supposed that the matter was only remembered as a good jest; but the future historian of Rome shared the honours and dangers of that dreadful day, where, according to the account of the French themselves, 'the Highland furies rushed in upon them with more violence than ever did a sea driven by a tempest.'"—*Miscellaneous Prose Works*, vol. xix. p. 331.

The King took up his residence, during his stay in his northern dominions, at Dalkeith Palace, a noble seat of the Buccleuch family, within six miles of Edinburgh; and here his dinner party almost daily included Sir Walter Soott, who, however, appeared to have derived more deep-felt gratification from his Majesty's kind and paternal attention to his juvenile host (the Duke of Buccleuch was at that time only in his sixteenth year), than from all the flattering condescension he lavished on himself. From Dalkeith the King repaired to Holyroodhouse two or three times, for the purposes of a levee or drawing-room. One Sunday he attended divine service in the Cathedral of St Giles', when the decorum and silence preserved by the multitudes in the streets, struck him as a most remarkable contrast to the rapturous excitement of his reception on week days; and the scene was not less noticeable in the eyes of Crabbe, who says, in his Journal — "The silence of Edinburgh on the Sunday is in itself devout."

Another very splendid day was that of a procession from Holyrood to the Castle, whereof the whole ceremonial had obviously been arranged under Scott's auspices, for the purpose of calling up, as exactly as might be, the time-hallowed observance of "the Riding of the Parliament." Mr Peel (then Secretary of State for the Home Department) was desirous of witnessing this procession privately, instead of taking a place in it, and he walked up the High Street

accordingly in company with Scott, some time before the royal cavalcade was to get into motion. The Poet was as little desirous of attracting notice as the Secretary, but he was soon recognised—and his companion, recently revisiting Scotland, expressed his lively remembrance of the enthusiastic veneration with which Scott's person was then greeted by all classes of his countrymen. When proposing Sir Walter's memory at a public dinner given to him in Glasgow, in December 1836, Sir Robert Peel said, —"I had the honour of accompanying his late Majesty as his Secretary of State, when he paid a visit to Edinburgh. I suppose there are many of you here who were present on that occasion, at that memorable scene, when the days of ancient chivalry were recalled—when every man's friendship seemed to be confirmed—when men met for the first time, who had always looked to each other with distrust, and resolved in the presence of their Sovereign to forget their hereditary feuds and animosities. In the beautiful language of Dryden—

> 'Men met each other with erected look—
> The steps were higher that they took;
> Friends to congratulate their friends would haste,
> And long inveterate foes saluted as they pass'd.'

"Sir Walter Scott took ar active lead in these ceremonies. On the day on which his Majesty was to pass from Holyroodhouse, he proposed to me to accompany him up the High Street, to see whether

the arrangements were completed! I said to him—'You are trying a dangerous experiment—you will never get through in privacy.' He said, 'They are entirely absorbed in loyalty.' But I was the better prophet; he was recognised from the one extremity of the street to the other, and never did I see such an instance of national devotion expressed."

The King at his first levee diverted many, and delighted Scott, by appearing in the full Highland garb,—the same brilliant *Steuart Tartans*, so called, in which certainly no Steuart, except Prince Charles, had ever before presented himself in the saloons of Holyrood. His Majesty's Celtic toilette had been carefully watched and assisted by the gallant Laird of Garth, who was not a little proud of the result of his dexterous manipulations of the royal plaid, and pronounced the King "a vera pretty man." And he did look a most stately and imposing person in that beautiful dress—but his satisfaction therein was cruelly disturbed, when he discovered, towering and blazing among and above the genuine Glengarries and Macleods and MacGregors, a figure even more portly than his own, equipped, from a sudden impulse of loyal ardour, in an equally complete set of the self-same conspicuous Steuart tartans:—

"He caught Sir William Curtis in a kilt—
While throng'd the chiefs of every Highland clan
To hail their brother, Vich Ian Alderman." *

* Byron's *Age of Bronze.*

In truth, this portentous apparition cast an air of ridicule and caricature over the whole of Sir Walter's Celtified pageantry. A sharp little bailie from Aberdeen, who had previously made acquaintance with the worthy Guildhall Baronet, and tasted the turtle-soup of his voluptuous yacht, tortured him, as he sailed down the long gallery of Holyrood, by suggesting that, after all, his costume was not quite perfect. Sir William, who had been rigged out, as the auctioneers' advertisements say, "regardless of expense," exclaimed that he must be mistaken — begged he would explain his criticism — and as he spoke, threw a glance of admiration on a *skene dhu* (black knife), which, like a true "warrior and hunter of deer," he wore stuck into one of his garters. "Oo ay — oo ay," quoth the Aberdonian; "the knife's a' right, mon, — but faar's your speen?" — (where's your spoon?) Such was Scott's story — but whether he "gave it a cocked-hat and walking-cane," in the hope of restoring the King's good-humour, so grievously shaken by this heroical *doppel-ganger*, it is not very necessary to enquire.

As in Hamlet, there was to be a play within the play; and, by his Majesty's desire, William Murray's company performed, in his presence, the drama of *Rob Roy*. James Ballantyne's newspaper chronicle says:—

"In the pit and galleries the audience were so closely wedged together, that it would have been found difficult to introduce be-

tween any two, even the point of a sabre. It was astonishing to observe the patience, and even the good-nature, with which the audience bore the extreme pressure. No one, indeed, could hope to better his situation by any effort; but the joy which was felt seemed completely to have absorbed every feeling of uneasiness. The boxes were filled with the rank, wealth, and beauty of Scotland. In this dazzling galaxy were observed the gallant Sir David Baird, Colonel Stewart of Garth, Glengarry, the Lord Provost, and Sir Walter Scott; each of whom, as he entered, was greeted with loud acclamations.

"At ten minutes past eight, the shouts of the multitude announced the approach of the King, which was confirmed by an outrider, who galloped up with the intelligence. The universal feeling of breathless suspense which at this moment pervaded the audience, cannot be described, and will never be forgotten. Our gracious King now stood before his assembled subjects. The momentary pause of death-like stillness which preceded the King's appearance, gave a deep tone of enthusiasm to the shout — the prolonged and heartfelt shout, which for more than a minute rent the house. The waving of handkerchiefs, of the plumed bonnet, and the tartan scarf, added much to the impressive gladness of the scene which, at this instant, met the eye of the Chief of Chiefs. His Majesty, with his wonted affability, repeatedly bowed to the audience, while the kindly smile which beamed from his manly countenance expressed to this favoured portion of his loving subjects the regard with which he viewed them.

"The play was *Rob Roy*, which his Majesty, in the best taste had been pleased to command, out of compliment, doubtless, to the country. During the whole performance, the King paid the greatest attention to the business of the stage, and laughed very heartily at some of the more odd incidents, — such as the precipitate retreat of Mr Owen beneath the bed-clothes — the contest in which the Bailie displays his prowess with the *het* poker — and the Bailie's loss of an essential part of his wardrobe. His Majesty seemed fully to comprehend and to relish very much the

good-natured wit and innocent sarcasms of the Glasgow magistrate. He laughed outright when this most humorous of functionaries said to Frank Osbaldiston, who was toying with Matty, —'Nane o' your Lun'on tricks;' when he mentioned the distinguishing appellatives of Old and Young Nick, which the citizens had bestowed upon his father and himself; when he testified his distrust of Major Galbraith, who 'has mair brandy than brains,' and of the Highlanders, of whom he says, 'they may quarrel amang themselves now and then, and gie ane anither a stab wi' a dirk or a slash wi' a claymore; but, tak my word on't, they're ay sure to join in the lang run against a' wha hae purses in their pockets and breeks on their hinder ends;' and when he said to the boy who returned him his hat and wig, 'that's a braw callant! ye'll be a man before your mither yet.'"

On the 24th of August the Magistrates of Edinburgh entertained their Sovereign with a sumptuous banquet in the Parliament-House; and upon that occasion also Sir Walter Scott filled a prominent station, having been invited to preside over one of the tables. But the most striking homage (though apparently an unconscious one) that his genius received during this festive period, was, when his Majesty, after proposing the health of his hosts the Magistrates and Corporation of the northern capital, rose and said there was one toast more, and but one, in which he must request the assembly to join him, —"I shall simply give you," said he, "*The Chieftains and Clans of Scotland* — and prosperity to the Land of Cakes." So completely had this hallucination taken possession, that nobody seems to have been startled at the time by language which thus

distinctly conveyed his Majesty's impression that the marking and crowning glory of Scotland consisted in the Highland clans and their chieftains.

Scott's early associations, and the prime labours and honours of his life, had been so deeply connected with the Highlands, that it was no wonder he should have taught himself to look on their clans and chiefs with almost as much affection and respect as if he had had more than a scantling of their blood in his veins. But it was necessary to be an eye-witness of this royal visit, in order to comprehend the extent to which he had allowed his imagination to get the mastery over him as to all these matters; and perhaps it was necessary to understand him thoroughly on such points, in his personal relations, feelings, and demeanour, before one could follow his genius to advantage in some of its most favoured and delightful walks of exertion. The strongest impression, however, which the whole affair left on my mind was, that I had never till then formed any just notion of his capacity for practical dealing and rule among men. I do not think he had much in common with the statesmen and diplomatists of his own age and country; but I am mistaken if Scott could not have played in other days either the Cecil or the Gondomar; and I believe no man, after long and intimate knowledge of any other great poet, has ever ventured to say, that he could have conceived the possibility of any such parts being adequately filled on the active

stage of the world, by a person in whom the powers of fancy and imagination had such predominant sway, as to make him in fact live three or four lives habitually in place of one. I have known other literary men of energy perhaps as restless as his; but all such have been entitled to the designation of *busy-bodies* — busy almost exclusively about trifles, and above all, supremely and constantly conscious of their own remarkable activity, and rejoicing and glorying in it. Whereas Scott, neither in literary labour nor in continual contact with the affairs of the world, ever did seem aware that he was making any very extraordinary exertion. The machine, thus gigantic in its impetus, moved so easily, that the master had no perception of the obstructions it overcame — in fact, no measure for its power. Compared to him, all the rest of the *poet* species that I have chanced to observe nearly — with but one glorious exception — have seemed to me to do little more than sleep through their lives — and at best to fill the sum with dreams; and I am persuaded that, taking all ages and countries together, the rare examples of indefatigable energy, in union with serene self-possession of mind and character, such as Scott's, must be sought for in the roll of great sovereigns or great captains, rather than in that of literary genius.

In the case of such renowned practical masters, it has been usual to account for their apparent calmness

amidst the stirring troubles of the world, by imputing to them callousness of the affections. Perhaps injustice has been done by the supposition; but at all events, hardly could any one extend it to the case of the placid man of the imaginative order; — a great depicter of man and nature, especially, would seem to be, *ex vi termini*, a profound sympathizer with the passions of his brethren, with the weaknesses as well as with the strength of humanity. Such assuredly was Scott. His heart was as "ramm'd with life" (to use a phrase of Ben Jonson's) as his brain; and I never saw him tried in a tenderer point than he was during the full whirl of splendour and gaiety that seemed to make every brain but his dizzy in the Edinburgh of August 1822.

Few things had ever given him so much pleasure as William Erskine's promotion to the Bench. It seemed to have restored his dearest friend to content and cheerfulness, and thus to have doubled his own sources of enjoyment. But Erskine's constitution had been shaken before he attained this dignity; and the anxious delicacy of his conscience rendered its duties oppressive and overwhelming. In a feeble state of body, and with a sensitive mind stretched and strained, a silly calumny, set a-foot by some envious gossip, was sufficient literally to chase him out of life. On his return to Edinburgh about the 20th of July, Scott found him in visible danger; he did whatever friendship could do to comfort and sti-

mulate him; but all was in vain. Lord Kinnedder survived his elevation hardly half a year—and who that observed Scott's public doings during the three or four weeks I have been describing, could have suspected that he was daily and nightly the watcher of a deathbed, or the consoler of orphans; striving all the while against

> "True earnest sorrows, rooted miseries,
> Anguish in grain, vexations ripe and blown?"

I am not aware that I ever saw him in such a state of dejection as he was when I accompanied him and his friend Mr Thomas Thomson from Edinburgh to Queensferry, in attendance upon Lord Kinnedder's funeral. Yet that was one of the noisiest days of the royal festival, and he had to plunge into some scene of high gaiety the moment after he returned. As we halted in Castle Street, Mr Crabbe's mild, thoughtful face appeared at the window, and Scott said, on leaving me,—"Now for what our old friend there puts down as the crowning curse of his poor player in the Borough—

> 'To hide in rant the heart-ache of the night.'"

The very few letters that Sir Walter addressed to friends at a distance during the King's stay in Scotland, are chiefly occupied with the calumny which proved fatal to Erskine,—the pains which his friends took, at his request, to sift it to the bottom,—their

conviction that he had been charged with an improper *liaison*, without even a shadow of justice, — and their ineffectual efforts to soothe his morbid sensibility. In one of these letters Scott says, — "The legend would have done honour to the invention of the devil himself, especially the object (at least the effect) being to torture to death one of the most soft-hearted and sensitive of God's creatures. I think it was in his nature to like female society in general better than that of men; he had also what might have given some slight shadow to these foul suspicions, an air of being particular in his attentions to women, a sort of Philandering which I used to laugh at him about. The result of a close investigation having been completely satisfactory, one would have thought the business at an end — but the shaft had hit the mark. At first, while these matters were going on, I got him to hold up his head pretty well; he dined with me, went to the play with my wife — got court dresses for his daughters, whom Lady Scott was to present, and behaved, in my presence at least, like a man, feeling indeed painfully, but bearing up as an innocent man ought to do. Unhappily I could only see him by snatches — the whole business of the reception was suddenly thrown on my hands, and with such a general abandonment, I may say, on all sides, that to work from morning till night was too little time to make the necessary arrangements. In the meantime, poor Erskine's

nerves became weaker and weaker; he was by nature extremely sensitive, easily moved to smiles or tears, and deeply affected by all those circumstances in society to which men of the world become hardened; as, for example, formal introductions to people of rank, and so forth; he was unhappily haunted by the idea that his character, assailed as it had been, was degraded in the eyes of the public, and no argument could remove this delusion. At length fever and delirium came on; he was bled repeatedly and very copiously—a necessary treatment perhaps, but which completely exhausted his weak frame. On the morning of Tuesday, the day of the King's arrival, he waked from his sleep, ordered his window to be opened that he might see the sun once more, and was a dead man immediately after. And so died a man whose head and heart were alike honourable to his kind, and died merely because he could not endure the slightest stain on his reputation.—The present is a scene of great bustle and interest, but though I *must* act my part, I am not, thank God, obliged at this moment to write about it."

In another letter, of nearly the same date, Scott says—"It would be rather difficult for any one who has never lived much among my good country-people, to comprehend that an idle story of a love-intrigue, a story alike base and baseless, should be the death of an innocent man of high character, high station,

and well advanced in years. It struck into poor Erskine's heart and soul, however, quite as cruelly as any similar calumny ever affected a modest woman — he withered and sunk. There is no need that I should say peace be with him! If ever a pure spirit quitted this vale of tears, it was William Erskine's. I must turn to and see what can be done about getting some pension for his daughters."

The following letter to his son, now a lieutenant in the 15th Hussars, but not yet returned from his German travels, was written a few days later:—

" My Dearest Walter,

" This town has been a scene of such giddy tumult since the King's coming, and for a fortnight before, that I have scarce had an instant to myself. For a long time everything was thrown on my hand, and even now, looking back, and thinking how many difficulties I had to reconcile, objections to answer, prejudices to smoothe away, and purses to open, I am astonished that I did not fever in the midst of it. All, however, has gone off most happily; and the Edinburgh populace have behaved themselves like so many princes. In the day when he went in state from the Abbey to the Castle with the Regalia borne before him, the street was lined with the various trades and professions, all arranged under their own deacons and office-bearers, with white wands in their

hands, and with their banners, and so forth; as they were all in their Sunday's clothes, you positively saw nothing like mob, and their behaviour, which was most steady and respectful towards the King, without either jostling or crowding, had a most singular effect. They shouted with great emphasis, but without any running or roaring, each standing as still in his place as if the honour of Scotland had depended on the propriety of his behaviour. This made the scene quite new to all who had witnessed the Irish reception. The Celtic Society, 'all plaided and plumed in their tartan array,'* mounted guard over the regalia while in the Abbey with great military order and steadiness. They were exceedingly nobly dressed and armed. There were two or three hundred Highlanders besides, brought down by their own Chiefs, and armed *cap-à-pie*. They were all put under my immediate command by their various Chiefs, as they would not have liked to have received orders from each other — so I acted as Adjutant-General, and had scores of them parading in Castle Street every day, with *piob agus brattach*, namely, pipe and banner. The whole went off excellently well. Nobody was so gallant as the Knight-Marischal, who came out with a full retinue of Esquires and Yeomen, — Walter and Charles were his pages. The Archers acted as gentlemen-pensioners, and

* Campbell's *Lochiel's Warning*.

kept guard in the interior of the palace. Mamma, Sophia, and Anne were presented, and went through the scene with suitable resignation and decorum. In short, I leave the girls to tell you all about balls, plays, sermons, and other varieties of this gay period. To-morrow or next day the King sets off; and I also take my departure, being willing to see Canning before he goes off for India, if, indeed, they are insane enough to part with a man of his power in the House of Commons at this eventful crisis.

"You have heard of poor Lord Londonderry (Castlereagh's) death by his own hand, in a fit of insanity. This explains a story he once told me of having seen a ghost, and which I thought was a very extraordinary narrative from the lips of a man of so much sense and steadiness of nerve. But no doubt he had been subject to aberrations of mind, which often create such phantoms.

"I have had a most severe personal loss in my excellent friend Lord Kinnedder, whose promotion lately rejoiced us so much. I leave you to judge what pain this must have given me, happening as it did in the midst of a confusion from which it was impossible for me to withdraw myself. . . . . .

"All our usual occupations have been broken in upon by this most royal row. Whether Abbotsford is in progress or not, I scarcely know: in short, I cannot say that I have thought my own thoughts, or wrought my own work, for at least a month past.

The same hurry must make me conclude abruptly. —Ever yours, most affectionately,

WALTER SCOTT."

The ghost story to which the foregoing letter alludes, was this: — Lord Castlereagh, when commanding, in early life, a militia regiment in Ireland, was stationed one night in a large desolate country-house, and his bed was at one end of a long dilapidated room, while at the other extremity a great fire of wood and turf had been prepared within a huge gaping old-fashioned chimney. Waking in the middle of the night, he lay watching from his pillow the gradual darkening of the embers on the hearth, when suddenly they blazed up, and a naked child stepped from among them upon the floor. The figure advanced slowly towards Lord Castlereagh, rising in stature at every step, until on coming within two or three paces of his bed, it had assumed the appearance of a ghastly giant, pale as death, with a bleeding wound on the brow, and eyes glaring with rage and despair. Lord Castlereagh leaped from his bed, and confronted the figure in an attitude of defiance. It retreated before him, diminishing as it withdrew, in the same manner that it had previously shot up and expanded; he followed it pace by pace, until the original childlike form disappeared among the embers. He then went back to his bed, and was disturbed no more. This story Lord Castlereagh told

with perfect gravity at one of his wife's supper parties in Paris in 1815, when Scott was among the hearers. I had often heard him repeat it — before the fatal catastrophe of August 1822 afforded the solution in the text — when he merely mentioned it as a singularly vivid dream, the product probably of a feverish night following upon a military debauch, — but affording a striking indication of the courageous temper, which proved true to itself even amidst the terrors of fancy.

Circumstances did not permit Sir Walter to fulfil his intention of being present at the public dinner given in Liverpool, on the 30th August, to Mr Canning, who on that occasion delivered one of the most noble of all his orations, and soon afterwards, instead of proceeding, as had been arranged, to take on him the supreme government of British India, was called to fill the place in the Cabinet which Lord Londonderry's calamitous death had left vacant. The King's stay in Scotland was protracted until the 29th of August. He then embarked from the Earl of Hopetoun's magnificent seat on the Firth of Forth, and Sir Walter had the gratification of seeing his Majesty, in the moment of departure, confer the honour of knighthood on two of his friends — both of whom, I believe, owed some obligation in this matter to his good offices — namely, Captain Adam Fergusson, deputy-keeper of the Regalia, and Henry Raeburn, R.A., properly selected as the representa-

tive of the fine arts in Scotland. This amiable man and excellent artist, however, did not long survive the receipt of his title. Sir Henry died on the 8th of July 1823 — the last work of his pencil having been, as already mentioned, a portrait of Scott.

On the eve of the King's departure, he received the following communication: —

"*To Sir Walter Scott, Bart., &c. &c.,*
Castle Street.

"Edinburgh, August 28, 1822.

"My Dear Sir,

"The King has commanded me to acquaint you, that he cannot bid adieu to Scotland without conveying to you individually his warm personal acknowledgments for the deep interest you have taken in every ceremony and arrangement connected with his Majesty's visit, and for your ample contributions to their complete success.

"His Majesty well knows how many difficulties have been smoothed, and how much has been effected by your unremitting activity, by your knowledge of your countrymen, and by the just estimation in which they hold you.

"The King wishes to make you the channel of conveying to the Highland chiefs and their followers, who have given to the varied scene which we have witnessed so peculiar and romantic a character, his

particular thanks for their attendance, and his warm approbation of their uniform deportment. He does justice to the ardent spirit of loyalty by which they are animated, and is convinced that he could offer no recompense for their services so gratifying to them as the assurance, which I now convey, of the esteem and approbation of their Sovereign.

"I have the honour to be, my dear Sir, with great truth, most truly and faithfully yours,

ROBERT PEEL."

Sir Walter forwarded copies of Mr Peel's paragraph touching the Highlanders to such heads of clans as had been of late in his counsels, and he received very grateful letters in return from Macleod, Glengarry, Sir Evan MacGregor, and several others of the order, on their return to the hills—as also from the Countess (afterwards Duchess) of Sutherland, whose son, Lord Francis, had, as she playfully expressed it, "been out," as her representative at the head of the most numerous and best appointed of all the kilted detachments. Glengarry was so delighted with what the Secretary of State had said, that the paragraph in question soon found its way to the newspapers; and then there appeared, in some Whig journal, a sarcastic commentary upon it, insinuating that, however highly the King might now choose to eulogize the poet and his Celtic allies, his Majesty had been considerably annoyed with much

of their arrangements and proceedings, and that a visible coolness had, in fact, been manifested towards Sir Walter during the King's stay in the north. As this idle piece of malice has been revived in some formal biographies of recent date, I may as well dispose of it for ever,* by extracting the following notes, which passed in the course of the next month between Scott and the Secretary of the Admiralty, whose official duty, I presume, it was to be in waiting at Ramsgate when the King disembarked from his yacht.—The "Dean Cannon" to whom these notes allude, was a clerical humorist, Dean of a fictitious order, who sat to Mr Theodore Hooke for the jolly Rector of Fuddle-cum-Pipes in his novel of Maxwell.

* I find that a writer in one of the Radical magazines has very recently revived this absurdity. He (or she) states with gravity, that Sir Walter had been led to expect the honour of a visit from the King in Castle Street, and that Sir Walter's cards of invitation for this grand occasion were actually issued, — but that his Majesty, in consequence of disgust at some of the poet's proceedings, abruptly signified that he had changed his mind. There is not a word of truth in this story. At all events, neither I, nor my brother-in-law Charles Scott, who was under Sir Walter's roof at the time, ever heard the slightest hint of such an affair. I rather think, that at one time the King had meant to return to London by land, and it seems very probable that he might have announced his gracious intention of in that case calling, as he passed, at Abbotsford.—[1839.]

"*To J. W. Croker, Esq., M.P., Admiralty, London.*

"Abbotsford, Thursday.

"My Dear Croker,

"What have you been doing this fifty years? We had a jolly day or two with your Dean Cannon at Edinburgh. He promised me a call if he returned through the Borders; but, I suppose, passed in the midst of the royal turmoil, or, perhaps, got tired of sheep's-head and haggis in the pass of Killiekrankie. He was wrong if he did; for even Win Jenkins herself discovered that where there were heads there must be bodies; and my forest haunch of mutton is noway to be sneezed at.—Ever yours,

WALTER SCOTT."

"*To Sir Walter Scott, Bart., Abbotsford.*

"Admiralty, Sept. 29, 1822.

"My Dear Scott,

"I wish it *were* 'fifty years since' you had heard of me, as, perhaps, I should find myself by and by celebrated, like the Baron of Bradwardine and some other friends of 'sixty years since.'

"I have not seen our Dean since his Scotch tour. I am sorry he was with you in such a period of bustle, as I should have liked to hear his sober

observations on the usual style of Edinburgh society.

"I had the honour of receiving his Majesty on his return, when he, after the first three words, began most graciously to tell me 'all about our friend Scott.' Some silly or malicious person, his Majesty said, had reported that there had been some coolness between you; but he added, that it was utterly false, and that he was, in every respect, highly pleased and gratified, and, he said, *grateful* for the devoted attention you had paid him; and he celebrated very warmly the success that had attended all your arrangements.

"Peel has sung your praises to the same tune; and I have been flattered to find that both the King and Peel thought me so much your friend, that they, as it were, *reported* to me the merit of 'my friend Scott.'—Yours ever, J. W. CROKER."

If Sir Walter lost something in not seeing more of Dean Cannon—who, among other social merits, sang the Ballads of Robin Hood with delightful skill and effect—there was a great deal better cause for regret in the unpropitious time selected for Mr Crabbe's visit to Scotland. In the glittering and tumultuous assemblages of that season, the elder bard was (to use one of his friend's favourite similitudes) very like *a cow in a frem'd loaning;* and though Scott could never have been seen in colours

more likely to excite admiration, Crabbe had hardly any opportunity of observing him in the everyday loveableness of his converse. Sir Walter's enthusiastic excitement about the kilts and the processions, seemed at first utterly incomprehensible to him; but by degrees he caught not a little of the spirit of the time, and even indited a set of stanzas, which have perhaps no other merit than that of reflecting it. He also perceived and appreciated Scott's dexterous management of prejudices and pretensions. He exclaims, in his Journal,—"What a keen discriminating man is my friend!" But I shall ever regret that Crabbe did not see him at Abbotsford among his books, his trees, and his own good simple peasants. They had, I believe, but one quiet walk together, and it was to the ruins of St Anthony's Chapel and Muschat's Cairn, which the deep impression made on Crabbe by the Heart of Mid-Lothian had given him an earnest wish to see. I accompanied them; and the hour so spent, in the course of which the fine old man gave us some most touching anecdotes of his early struggles, was a truly delightful contrast to the bustle and worry of miscellaneous society which consumed so many of his few hours in Scotland. Scott's family were more fortunate than himself in this respect. They had from infancy been taught to reverence Crabbe's genius, and they now saw enough of him to make them think of him ever afterwards with tender affection.

CHAPTER LVII.

Mons Meg — Jacobite Peerages — Invitation from the Galashiels Poet — Progress of Abbotsford House — Letters to Joanna Baillie, Terry, Lord Montagu, &c. — Completion and Publication of Peveril of the Peak.

1822-1823.

THOUGH Mr Crabbe found it necessary to leave Scotland without seeing Abbotsford, this was not the case with many less celebrated friends from the south, who had flocked to Edinburgh at the time of the Royal Festival. Sir Walter's house was, in his own phrase, "like a cried fair," during several weeks after the King's departure; and as his masons were then in the highest activity upon the addition to the building, the bustle and tumult within doors and without was really perplexing. We shall find him confessing that the excitement of the Edinburgh scenes had thrown him into a fever, and that he

never needed repose more. He certainly never had less of it.

Nor was an unusual influx of English pilgrims the only legacy of "the glorious days" of August. A considerable number of persons who had borne a part in the ceremonies of the King's reception fancied that their exertions had entitled them to some substantial mark of royal approbation; and post after post brought long-winded despatches from these clamorous enthusiasts, to him who, of all Scotchmen, was supposed to enjoy, as to matters of this description, the readiest access to the fountain of honour. To how many of these applications he accorded more than a civil answer, I cannot tell; but I find that the Duke of York was too good a *Jacobite* not to grant favourable consideration to his request, that one or two poor half-pay officers who had distinguished themselves in the van of *the Celts*, might be, as opportunity offered, replaced in Highland regiments, and so reinvested with the untheatrical "Garb of Old Gaul."

Sir Walter had also a petition of his own. This related to a certain gigantic piece of ordnance, celebrated in the history of the Scottish Jameses under the title of *Mons Meg*, and not forgotten in Drummond's Macaronics —

—— Sicuti Mons Megga crackasset,——

which had been removed from Edinburgh Castle to

the Tower of London, after the campaign of 1745. When Scott next saw the King, after he had displayed his person on the chief bastion of the old fortress, he lamented the absence of Mons Meg on that occasion in language which his Majesty could not resist. There ensued a correspondence with the official guardians of Meg—among others, with the Duke of Wellington, then Master-General of the Ordnance, and though circumstances deferred her restoration, it was never lost sight of, and took place finally when the Duke was Prime Minister, which I presume smoothed petty obstacles, in 1829.

But the serious petition was one in which Sir Walter expressed feelings in which I believe every class of his fellow-countrymen were disposed to concur with him very cordially—and certainly none more so than the generous King himself. The object which the poet had at heart was the restoration of the Scottish Peerages forfeited in consequence of the insurrections of 1715 and 1745; and the honourable families, in whose favour this liberal measure was soon afterwards adopted, appear to have vied with each other in the expression of their gratefulness for his exertions on their behalf. The following paper seems to be his sketch of the grounds on which the representatives of the forfeited Peers ought to approach the Ministry; and the view of their case thus suggested, was, it will be allowed, dexterously selected, and persuasively enforced.

"*Hints Respecting an Application for a Reversal of the Attainders in* 1715 *and* 1745.

"September 1822.

"A good many years ago, Mr Erskine of Mar, and other representatives of those noble persons who were attainted for their accession to the Rebellions of 1715 and 1745, drew up a humble petition to the King, praying that his Majesty, taking into his royal consideration the long time which had since elapsed, and the services and loyalty of the posterity of the attainted Peers, would be graciously pleased to recommend to Parliament an Act for reversing all attainders passed against those who were engaged in 1715 and 1745, so as to place their descendants in the same situation, as to rank, which they would have held had such attainders never taken place. This petition, it is believed, was proposed about the time that an Act was passed for restoring the forfeited estates, still in possession of the Crown; and it was imagined that this gracious act afforded a better opportunity for requesting a reversal of the attainders than had hitherto occurred, especially as it was supposed that the late Lord Melville, the great adviser of the one measure, was equally friendly to the other. The petition in question, however, it is believed, never was presented to the King—it having been understood that the Chancellor, Lord Thurlow,

was hostile to it, and that, therefore, it would be more prudent not to press it then. It is thought by some, that looking to his Majesty's late paternal and most gracious visit to his ancient kingdom of Scotland, in which he seemed anxious to revive and encourage all the proud recollections of its former renown, and to cherish all associations connected with the events of the olden times, as by the display of the Regalia, by the most distinguished attention to the Royal Archers, and by other similar observances, a fit time has now arrived for most humbly soliciting the royal attention to the state of those individuals, who, but for the conscientious, though mistaken loyalty of their ancestors, would now have been in the enjoyment of ancient and illustrious honours.

"Two objections might, perhaps, occur; but it is hoped that a short statement may be sufficient to remove them. It may be thought, that if the attainders of 1715 and 1745 were reversed, it would be unjust *not* to reverse all attainders which had ever passed in any period of the English history—a measure which might give birth to such a multiplicity of claims for ancient English peerages, forfeited at different times, as might affect seriously the House of Lords, so as both to render that assembly improperly numerous, and to lower the precedency of many Peers who now sit there. To this it is submitted, as a sufficient answer, that there is no occasion for reversing

any attainders previous to the accession of the present Royal Family, and that the proposed Act might be founded on a gracious declaration of the King, expressive simply of his wish to have all attainders reversed, for offences against his *own* royal House of Hanover. This limitation would at once give ample room for the display of the greatest magnanimity on the part of the King, and avoid the bad consequences indicated in the objection; for, with the exception of Lords Derwentwater and Widdrington, who joined in the Rebellion of 1715, the only Peers who ever joined in any insurrection against the Hanover family were Peers of Scotland, who, by their restoration, in so far as the families are not extinct, could not add to the number of the House of Lords, but would only occasion a small addition to the number of those already entitled to vote at the election of the Sixteen Representative Peers. And it seems plain, that in such a limitation there would be no more injustice than might have been alleged against the Act by which the forfeited estates, still in the hands of Government, were restored; while no compensation was given for such estates as had been already sold by Government. The same argument might have been stated, with equal force, against the late reversal of the attainder of Lord Edward Fitzgerald: it might have been asked, with what sort of justice can you reverse this attainder, and refuse to reverse all attainders that ever took place either in England

or Ireland? But no such objection was made, and the recommendation of the King to Parliament was received almost with acclamation. And now that the family of Lord E. Fitzgerald have been restored to the rights which he had forfeited, the petition in the present case will, it is hoped, naturally strike his Majesty with greater force, when he is pleased to recollect that his lordship's attainder took place on account of accession to a rebellion, of which the object was to introduce a foreign force into Ireland, to overturn the Constitution, and to produce universal misery; while the elder attainders now in question were the results of rebellions undertaken from views of conscientious, though mistaken, loyalty in many individuals, who were much attached to their country, and to those principles of hereditary succession to the Throne, in which they had been educated, and which, in almost every instance, ought to be held sacred.

"A second objection, perhaps, might be raised, on the ground that the reversal of the attainders in question would imply a censure against the conduct of that Government by which they were passed; and consequently an approval, in some measure, of those persons who were so attainted. But it might as well be said that the reversal of Lord E. Fitzgerald's attainder implied a censure on the Parliament of Ireland, and on the King, by whom that act had

been passed; or that the restoration of an officer to the rank from which he had been dismissed by the sentence of a court-martial approved of by the King, would imply a censure on that court, or on that King. Such implication might, at all events, be completely guarded against by the preamble of the proposed Act—which might condemn the Rebellion in strong terms—but reverse the attainders, from the magnanimous wish of the King to obliterate the memory of all former discord, so far as his own House had been the object of attack, and from a just sense of the meritorious conduct and undoubted loyalty of the descendants of those unfortunate, though criminal individuals. And it is humbly submitted, that as there is no longer any Pretender to his Majesty's Crown, and as all classes of his subjects now regard him as both *de jure* and *de facto* the only true representative of our ancient race of Princes—now is the time for such an act of royal magnanimity, and of Parliamentary munificence, by which the honour of so many noble houses would be fully restored; while, at the same time, the *station* of the representatives of certain other noble houses, who have assumed titles, their right to which is, under the present law, much more than doubtful, would be fully confirmed, and placed beyond the reach of objection."

In Scott's collection of miscellaneous MSS. the article that stands next to this draft of "Hints," is one that I must indulge myself with placing in similar juxtaposition here. I have already said something of his friendly relations with the people of the only manufacturing village in his neighbourhood. Among other circumstances highly grateful to them was his regular attendance on the day when their Deacon and Convener for the year entered on his office—which solemnity occurred early in October. On the approach of these occasions, he usually received an invitation in verse, penned by a worthy weaver named Thomson, but known and honoured all over Teviotdale as "the Galashiels Poet." At the first of these celebrations that ensued the forthcoming of Rob Roy, this bard delighted his compeers, and not less their guest, by chanting a clever parody on the excellent song of "Donald *Caird*," *i. e. Tinker*, the chorus being—in place of Scott's

"Dinna let the Sherra ken
Donald Caird's come again;"—

"*Think ye does the Sherra ken,*
Rob Mac Gregor's come again:

and that was thenceforth a standing ditty on the day of the Deacon. The Sheriff's presence at the installation of 1822 was requested by the following epistle:—

"*To Sir Walter Scott, Bart., Abbotsford.*

"*Murray's Inn, Galashiels,*
1st Oct. 1822.

"This year we rather 'gin to falter
If an epistle we should send ye.
Say some, 'Ye only plague Sir Walter,
He canna ilka year attend ye:
Last year, nae doubt, he condescended,
Just to be quit o' your palaver;
But he could ne'er ha'e apprehended
That ilka year ye'd ask the favour.
He's dined but lately wi' the King,
And round him there is sic a splendour,
He winna stoop to such a thing,
For a' the reasons ye can render:
Content yourselves wi' John o' Skye;
Your impudence deserves a wiper:
Ye'll never rest till he grow shy,
And e'en refuse to send his piper.'

"These reasons a' may be withstood,
Wi' nae pretensions for a talker;—
Ye mauna lightly Deacon Wood,
But dine wi' him like Deacon Walker.
Your favourite dish is not forgot:
Imprimis, for your bill of fare,
We'll put a sheep's-head i' the pot,—
Ye'se get the cantle for your share:
And we've the best o' "Mountain dew,"
Was gather'd whare ye mauna list,
In spite o' a' the gauger crew,
By Scotland's 'children o' the mist.'

Last year your presence made us canty,
For which we hae ye yet to thank;
This year, in faith, we canna want ye,
Ye're absence wad mak sic a blank.—
As a' our neibors are our friends,
The company is not selected;
But for to mak ye some amends,
There's not a social soul neglected.

We wish you luck o' your new biggin';
There's no the like o't on the Tweed;
Ye'll no mistak it by its riggin', —*
It is an oddity indeed.
To Lady Scott our kind respect —
To her and to Miss Ann our thanks;
We hope this year they'll no neglect
Again to smile upon our ranks.
Upon our other kind regards
At present we will no be treating,
For some discourse we maun hae spared
To raise the friendly crack at meeting.
So ye maun come, if ye can win —
Gie's nae excuse, like common gentry;
If we suspect, as sure's a gun,
On ABBOTSFORD we'll place a sentry."

It was a pleasant thing to see the annual procession of these weavers of Galashiels — or (for they were proud enough to adopt the name) of *Gandercleuch* — as they advanced from their village with John of Skye at their head, and the banners of their

* The old song says, —

"This is no mine ain house,
I ken by the riggin o't, &c." — *See Collection.*

craft all displayed, to meet Sir Walter and his family at the ford, and escort them in splendour to the scene of the great festivity. And well pleased was he to "share the triumph and partake the gale" of Deacon Wood or Deacon Walker—and a proud man was Laureate Thomson when his health was proposed by the "brother bard" of Abbotsford. At this Galashiels festival, the Ettrick Shepherd also was a regular attendant. He used to come down the night before, and accompany Sir Walter in the only carriage that graced the march; and many of Hogg's best ballads were produced for the first time amidst the cheers of the men of Ganderscleuch. Meeting Poet Thomson not long since in a different part of the country, he ran up to me, with the tears in his eyes, and exclaimed, "Eh, sir, it does me good to see you—for it puts me in mind of the grand days in our town, when Scott and Hogg were in their glory—and we were a' leal Tories!" Galashiels is now a nest of Radicalism—but I doubt if it be a happier place than in the times of Deacon Wood and Deacon Walker.

In the following letters we have, as many readers may think, rather too much of the "new bigging" and "the rigging o't;"—but I cannot consent to curtail such characteristic records of the days when Scott was finishing Peveril of the Peak, and projecting his inimitable portraitures of Louis XI. and Charles of Burgundy.

" *To Daniel Terry, Esq., London.*

" Abbotsford, October 5, 1822.

" My Dear Terry,

" I have been 'a *vixen* and a *griffin*,' as Mrs Jenkins says, for many days—in plain truth, very much out of heart. I know you will sympathize particularly with me on the loss of our excellent friend W. Erskine, who fell a victim to a hellishly false story which was widely circulated concerning him, or rather I should say to the sensibility of his own nature, which could not endure even the shadow of reproach—like the ermine, which is said to pine to death if its fur is soiled. And now Hay Donaldson* has followed him, an excellent man, who long managed my family affairs with the greatest accuracy and kindness. The last three or four years have swept away more than half the friends with whom I lived in habits of great intimacy—the poor Duke, Jocund Johnnie, Lord Somerville, the Boswells, and now this new deprivation. So it must be with us

" When ance life's day draws near the gloamin;"†—

* Mr Hay Donaldson drew up an affecting sketch of his friend Lord Kinnedder's Life and Character, to which Scott made some additions, and which was printed, but not, I think, for public circulation. He died shortly afterwards, on the 30th of September 1822.

† Burns.

and yet we proceed with our plantations and plans as if any tree but the sad cypress would accompany us to the grave, where our friends have gone before us. It is the way of the world, however, and must be so, otherwise life would be spent in unavailing mourning for those whom we have lost. It is better to enjoy the society of those who remain to us. I am heartily glad, my dear Terry, that you have carried through your engagement so triumphantly, and that your professional talents are at length so far appreciated as to place you in the first rank in point of emolument as in point of reputation. Your talents, too, are of a kind that will *wear well*, and health permitting, hold out to you a long course of honourable exertion; you should begin to make a little nest egg as soon as you can; the first little hoard which a man can make of his earnings is the foundation-stone of comfort and independence — so says one who has found it difficult to practise the lesson he offers you.

We are getting on here in the old style. The new castle is now roofing, and looks superb; in fact, a little too good for the estate, but we must work the harder to make the land suitable. The library is a superb room, but after all I fear the shelves ought not to be less than ten or twelve feet high; I had quite decided for nine feet, but on an exacter measurement this will not accommodate fully the books I have now in hand, and leaves no room

for future purchases. Pray is there not a tolerable book on upholstery—I mean plans for tables, chairs, commodes, and such like? If so, I would be much obliged to you to get me a copy, and send it under Freeling's cover. When you can pick up a few odd books for me, especially dramatic, you will do me a great kindness, and I will remit the blunt immediately. I wish to know what the Montrose sword cost, that I may send the *gratility*. I must look about for a mirror for the drawing-room, large enough to look well between the windows. Beneath, I mean to place the antique mosaic slab which Constable has given me, about four feet and a half in length. I am puzzled about framing it. Another anxious subject with me is fitting up the little oratory —I have three thick planks of West-Indian cedar, which, exchanged with black oak, would, I think, make a fine thing.—I wish you had seen the King's visit here; it was very grand; in fact, in moral grandeur it was beyond any thing I ever witnessed, for the hearts of the poorest as well as the greatest were completely merged in the business. William Murray behaved excellently, and was most useful. I worked like a horse, and had almost paid dear for it, for it was only a sudden and violent eruption that saved me from a dangerous illness. I believe it was distress of mind, suppressed as much as I could, and mingling with the fatigue: certainly I was miserably ill, and am now only got quite better. I wish to

know how Mrs Terry, and you, and my little Walter are; also little miss. I hope, if I live so long, I may be of use to the former; little misses are not so easily accommodated.—Pray remember me to Mrs Terry. Write to me soon, and believe me, always most truly yours, WALTER SCOTT."

"*To Lieutenant Walter Scott, 15th Hussars, Berlin.*

"Abbotsford, 7th October 1822.

"My Dearest Walter,

"I wrote you a full account of the King's visit, which went off *à merveille*. I suffered a good deal in consequence of excessive fatigue and constant anxiety, but was much relieved by a very inconvenient and nasty eruption which physicians call the *prickly heat*. Ross says, if it had not broke out I would have had a bad fever—in the meantime, though the complaint has gone off, my arms and legs are spotted like a leopard's. The King has expressed himself most graciously to me, both at leaving Edinburgh and since he returned. I know from sure authority he has scarce ever ceased to speak about the Scotch, and the fine taste and spirit of their reception.

"Some small accompts of yours have come in. This is wrong—you ought never to leave a country without clearing every penny of debt; and you have no apology for doing so, as you are never refused

what I can afford. When you can get a troop, I shall expect you to maintain yourself without farther recourse on me, except in the case of extraordinary accident; so that, without pinching yourself, you must learn to keep all your expenses within your income; it is a lesson which if not learned in youth lays up much bitter regret for age.

"I am pleased with your account of Dresden, and could have wished you had gone on to Töplitz, Leipsic, &c. At Töplitz Buonaparte had his fatal check, losing Vandamme, and about ten thousand men, who had pressed too unwarily on the allies after raising the siege of Dresden. These are marked events in your profession, and when you are on the ground you ought to compare the scene of action with such accounts as you can get of the motives and motions of the contending powers.

"We are all quite well here; my new house is quite finished as to masonry, and we are now getting on the roof just in time to face the bad weather. Charles is well at last writing—the Lockharts speak for themselves. Game is very plenty, and two or three pair of pheasants are among the young wood at Abbotslee. I have given strict orders there shall be no shooting of any kind on that side of the hill. Our house has been a little disturbed by a false report that puss had eat up the favourite robin-redbreast who comes every morning to sing for crumbs after breakfast, but the reappearance of Robin ex-

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culpates old Hinzie. On your birthday this week you become *major!*—God send you the wit and reflection necessary to conduct yourself as a man; from henceforward, my province will be to advise rather than to command.—Well, we shall have a little jollification, and drink your health on becoming legally major, which, I suppose, *you* think a much less matter than were you to become so in the military term.

"Mamma is quite well, and with Ann and Cousin Walter join in compliments and love.—Always affectionately yours, WALTER SCOTT."

In the next letter to Terry, Scott refers to the death of an amiable friend of his, Mr James Wedderburne, Solicitor-General for Scotland, which occurred on the 7th November; and we have an indication that Peveril of the Peak had reached the fourth volume, in his announcement of the subject for Quentin Durward.

"*To D. Terry, Esq., London.*

"Abbotsford, Nov. 10th, 1822.

"My Dear Terry,

"I got all the plans safe, and they are delightful. The library ceiling will be superb, and we have plenty of ornaments for it, without repeating one of those in the eating-room. The plan of shelves is

also excellent, and will, I think, for a long time, suffice my collection. The brasses for the shelves I like—but not the price: the notched ones, after all, do very well. I have had three grand hawls since I last wrote to you. The pulpit, repentance-stool, King's seat, and God knows how much of carved wainscot, from the kirk of Dunfermline,* enough to coat the hall to the height of seven feet:—supposing it boarded above for hanging guns, old portraits, intermixed with armour, &c.—it will be a superb entrance-gallery: this is hawl the first. Hawl second is twenty-four pieces of the most splendid Chinese paper, twelve feet high by four wide, a present from my cousin Hugh Scott,† enough to finish the drawing-room and two bed-rooms. Hawl third is a quantity of what is called Jamaica cedar-wood, enough for fitting up both the drawing-room and the library, including the presses, shelves, &c.: the wood is finely pencilled and most beautiful, something like the colour of gingerbread; it costs very little more than oak, works much easier, and is never touched by vermin of any kind. I sent Mr Atkinson a specimen, but it was from the plain end of the plank: the interior is finely waved and variegated. Your

* For this *hawl* Sir Walter was indebted to the Magistrates of Dunfermline.

† Captain Hugh Scott, of the East-India Company's Naval Service (now of Draycote House, near Derby), second son to the late Laird of Raeburn.

kind and unremitting exertions in our favour will soon plenish the drawing-room. Thus we at pre sent stand. We have a fine old English cabinet, with china, &c.—and two superb elbow-chairs, the gift of Constable, carved most magnificently, with groups of children, fruit, and flowers, in the Italian taste: they came from Rome, and are much admired. It seems to me that the mirror you mention, being framed in carved box, would answer admirably well with the chairs, which are of the same material. The mirror should, I presume, be placed over the drawing-room chimney-piece; and opposite to it I mean to put an antique table of mosaic marbles, to support Chantrey's bust. A good sofa would be desirable, and so would the tapestry-screen, if really fresh and beautiful; but as much of our furniture will be a little antiquated, one would not run too much into that taste in so small an apartment. For the library, I have the old oak chairs now in the little armoury, eight in number, and we might add one or two pair of the ebony chairs you mention. I should think this enough, for many seats in such a room must impede access to the books; and I don't mean the library to be on ordinary occasions a public room. Perhaps the tapestry-screen would suit better here than in the drawing-room. I have one library table here, and shall have another made for atlases and prints. For the hall I have four chairs of black oak. In other matters, we can make it out

well enough. In fact, it is my object rather to keep under my new accommodations at first, both to avoid immediate outlay, and that I may leave room for pretty things which may occur hereafter. I would to Heaven I could take a cruize with you through the brokers, which would be the pleasantest affair possible, only I am afraid I should make a losing voyage of it. Mr Atkinson has missed a little my idea of the oratory, fitting it up entirely as a book-case, whereas I should like to have had recesses for curiosities—for the Bruce's skull*—for a crucifix; &c. &c.; in short, a little cabinet instead of a book-closet. Four sides of books would be perfectly sufficient; the other four, so far as not occupied by door or window, should be arranged tastefully for antiquities, &c., like the inside of an antique cabinet, with drawers and shottles, and funny little arches. The oak screen dropped as from the clouds: it is most acceptable; I might have guessed there was only one kind friend so ready to supply hay to my hobby-horse. You have my views in these matters and your own taste; and I will send the *needful* when you apprise me of the amount total. Where things are not quite satisfactory, it is better to wait a while on every account, for the amusement is over when one has room for nothing more. The house

* A cast of the skull of King Robert the Bruce, made when his tomb was discovered during some repairs of Dunfermline Abbey, in 1819.

is completely roofed, &c., and looks worthy of Mrs Terry's painting. I never saw anything handsomer than the grouping of towers, chimneys, &c. upon the roof, when seen at a proper distance.

"Once more, let me wish you joy of your professional success. I can judge, by a thousand minute items, of the advance you make with the public, just as I can of the gradual progress of my trees, because I am interested in both events. You may say, like Burke, you were not 'coaxed and dandled into eminence,' but have fought your way gallantly, shown your passport at every barrier, and been always a step in advance, without a single retrograde movement. Every one wishes to advance rapidly, but when the desired position is gained, it is far more easily maintained by him whose ascent has been gradual, and whose favour is founded not on the unreasonable expectations entertained from one or two seasons, but from an habitual experience of the power of pleasing during several years. You say not a word of poor Wattles. I hope little Miss has not put his nose out of joint entirely.

"I have not been very well—a whoreson thickness of blood, and a depression of spirits arising from the loss of friends (to whom I am now to add poor Wedderburne), have annoyed me much; and Peveril will, I fear, smell of the apoplexy. I propose a good rally, however, and hope it will be a powerful effect. My idea is, *entre nous*, a Scotch archer in the French

king's guard, *tempore* Louis XI., the most picturesque of all times.—Always yours very faithfully,

WALTER SCOTT."

This letter contains the first allusion to the species of malady that ultimately proved fatal to Sir Walter Scott. He, as far as I know, never mentioned to any one of his family the symptoms which he here speaks of; but long before any serious apoplectic seizure occurred, it had been suspected by myself, and by others of his friends, that he had sustained slight attacks of that nature, and concealed them.

The depression of spirits of which he complains, could not, however, have hung over him long; at least it by no means interrupted any of his usual occupations. A grievous interruption had indeed been occasioned by the royal visit, its preparations, and its legacy of visitants and correspondence; but he now laboured to make up his lee-way, and Peveril of the Peak was completed, and some progress had also been achieved with the first volume of Quentin Durward, before the year reached its close. Nor had he ceased to contemplate future labour, and continued popularity, with the same firmness and hopefulness as ever. He had, in the course of October, completed his contract, and received Constable's bills, for another unnamed "work of fiction;" and this was the last such work in which the great bookseller of Edinburgh was destined to have any concern. The

engagement was in fact that redeemed three years afterwards by *Woodstock*.

Sir Walter was, as may be supposed, stimulated in all these matters by the music of the hammer and saw at Abbotsford. Witness this letter, written during the Christmas recess —

" *To Daniel Terry, Esq., London.*

" Abbotsford, January 9th, 1823.

" Dear Terry,

" It is close firing to answer letters the day they come to hand, but I am afraid of losing opportunities, as in the case of the mirror, not to be retrieved. I am first to report progress, for your consideration and Mr Atkinson's, of what I have been doing here. Everything about the house has gone *à rien mieux*, and the shell is completely finished; all the upper story and garrets, as well as the basement, have had their first coat of plaster, being first properly fenced from the exterior air. The only things which we now greatly need are the designs for the ceilings of the hall and drawing-room, as the smiths and plasterers are impatient for their working plans, the want of which rather stops them. I have taken actual, real, and corporal possession of my sitting-room, which has been fitted with a temporary floor, door, and window — the oratory, and the door into the library, being bricked up *ad*

interim. This was a step of necessity, as my books began to suffer in Peter's garret, so they were brought up to the said room, and are all ranged in their old shelves and presses, so as to be completely come-atable. They have been now there a fortnight without the least appearance of damp, so dry do the brick facings make the wall; and as we keep good fires in the place (which, by the by, vents like all Mr Atkinson's chimneys, in a superior style), I intend they shall remain there till they are transferred to *the* Library, so that this room will be fitted up last of all. I shall be then able to judge of a point on which I have at present some doubt—namely, the capacity of my library to accommodate my books. Should it appear limited (*I* mean, making allowance for future additions) I can perhaps, by Mr Atkinson's assistance, fit up this private room with a gallery, which might enter by carrying the stair up the oratory, and renouncing the idea of fitting it up. The cedar, I assure you, is quite beautiful. I have had it sawn out into planks, and every one who looks at it agrees it will be more beautiful than oak. Indeed, what I have seen of it put to that use, bears no comparison unless with such heart-of-oak as Bullock employed, and that you know is veneered. I do not go on the cry in this, but practical knowledge, for Mr Waugh, my neighbour, a West-Indian planter (but himself bred a joiner), has finished the prettiest apartment with it that I ever saw. I should be apt to prefer

the brass notches, were the difference only what you mention, namely, £20; but I cannot make out how that should be, unless by supposing the joiners' wages much higher than with us. But indeed, in such a library as mine, when the books are once catalogued, I could perhaps in many instances make fixed shelves answer the turn, by adopting a proper arrangement from the beginning. I give up the Roslin drop in the oratory—indeed I have long seen it would not do. I think the termination of it may be employed as the central part of Mr. Atkinson's beautiful plan for the recess in the library; by the by, the whole of that ceiling, with the heads we have got, will be the prettiest thing ever seen in these parts.

"The plan preferred for the door between the entrance-hall and ante-room, was that which was marked B. To make this plain, I re-enclose A and C—which mode of explaining myself puts me in mind of the evidence of an Irish officer.—'We met three rebels, one we shot, hanged another, the third we flogged and made a guide of.'—'Which of the three did you flog and make a guide of?'—'Him whom we neither shot nor hanged.' Understand, therefore, that the plan not returned is that fixed upon. I think there is nothing left to say about the house excepting the chimney-pieces. I have selected for the hall chimney-piece one of the cloister arches of Melrose, of which I enclose an accurate drawing. I can get it finished here very beautifully,

at days' wages, in our dark red freestone. The chimneys of drawing-room, library, and my own room, with grates conforming, will be got much better in London than anywhere else; by the by, for the hall I have got an old massive chimney-grate which belonged to the old persecutor Archbishop Sharp, who was murdered on Magus Moor. All our grates must be contrived to use wood as well as coal, with what are called half-dogs.

"I am completely Lady Wishfort* as to the escritoire. In fact, my determination would very much depend on the possibility of showing it to advantage; for if it be such as is set up against a wall, like what is called, *par excellence*, a writing-desk, you know we have no space in the library that is not occupied by book-presses. If, on the contrary, it stands quite free,—why, I do not know—I must e'en leave it to you to decide between taste and prudence. The silk damask, I fancy, we must have for the drawing-room curtains; those in the library we shall have of superfine crimson cloth from Galashiels, made out of mine own wool. I should like the silk to be sent down in the bales, as I wish these curtains to be made up on a simple useful pattern, without that paltry trash of drapery, &c. &c. I would take the armoury curtains for my pattern, and set my own tailor, Robin Goodfellow, to make them up; and I think I may save on the charge of such an upholsterer as my

* See Congreve's Comedy of *The Way of the World.*

friend Mr Trotter, much of the difference in the value of materials. The chairs will be most welcome. Packing is a most important article, and I must be indebted to your continued goodness for putting that into proper hands. The mirror, for instance — O Lord, sir!

"Another and most important service would be to procure me, from any person whom Mr Atkinson may recommend, the execution of the enclosed commission for fruit-trees. We dare not trust Edinburgh; for though the trade never makes a pause in furnishing you with the most rare plants, insomuch that an old friend of mine, the original Jonathan Oldbuck, having asked one of them to supply him with a dozen of *anchovies*, he answered 'he had plenty of them, but, being a delicate plant, they were still in the hot-house'—yet, when the said plants come to bear fruit, the owner may adopt the classical line—

'Miratur novas frondes et non sua poma.'

My new gardener is a particularly clever fellow in his way, and thinks the enclosed kinds like to answer best. Our new garden-wall will be up in spring, time enough to have the plants set. By the way, has Mr Atkinson seen the way of heating hot-houses, &c., adopted by Mr Somebody at Glasgow, who has got a patent? It is by a new application of steam, which is poured into a vaulted roof, made completely air-tight, except where it communicates with an iron

box, so to speak, a receptacle of the heated air. This vaulted recess is filled with bricks, stones, or such like substances, capable of receiving and retaining an extreme degree of heat from the steam with which they are surrounded. The steam itself is condensed and carried off; but the air, which for many hours continues to arise from these heated bricks, ascends into the iron receptacle, and is let off by ventilators into the space to be heated, in such quantities as may be desired. The excellence of this plan is not only the saving of fuel, but also and particularly the certainty that the air cannot be overheated, for the temperature at hottest does not exceed 95 degrees—nor overchilled, for it continues to retain, and of course to transmit, the same degree of heated air, or but with little variation, for ten or twelve hours, so as to render the process of forcing much more certain and simple than it has been from any means hitherto devised. I dare say that this is a very lame explanation, but I will get a perfect one for Mr Atkinson if he wishes it. The Botanical Garden at Glasgow has adopted the plan, and they are now changing that of Edinburgh for the same purpose. I have not heard whether it has been applied to houses; but, from the principle, I should conceive it practicable.

" Peveril has been stopped ten days, having been driven back to Leith Roads by stress of weather. I have not a copy here, but will write to Ballantyne to send you one forthwith. I am sick of thinking of it

myself. We hear of you often, and always of your advancing favour with the public. It is one of many cases in which the dearly beloved public has come round to my decided opinion, after seeming to waver for a time. Washington Irving's success is another instance of the same. Little Walter will, I hope, turn out all we can wish him; and Mrs Terry's health, I would fain hope, will be completely re-established. The steam-boats make a jaunt to Scotland comparatively so speedy and easy, that I hope you will sometimes cast both of yourselves this way. Abbotsford, I am sure, will please you, when you see all your dreams realized, so far as concerns elevation, &c.

"John Thomson, Dudding-tone, has given me his most splendid picture, painted, he says, on purpose for me—a true Scottish scene. It seems to me that many of our painters shun the sublime of our country, by labouring to introduce trees where doubtless by search they might be found, but where most certainly they make no conspicuous part of the landscape, being like some little folks who fill up a company, and put you to the proof before you own to have seen them. Now this is Fast Castle, famous both in history and legend, situated near St Abb's Head, which you most certainly must have seen, as you have cruized along the coast of Berwickshire. The view looks from the land down on the ragged ruins, a black sky and a foaming ocean beyond them. There is more imagination in the picture than in any I have seen of a long

time—a sort of Salvator Rosa's doings.—*Revenons à nos moutons.* I find that the plans for the window-shutters of the entrance-hall are much wanted. My wainscot will not be altogether seven feet—about six. Higher it cannot be, because of the pattern of the Dunfermline part, and lower I would not have it, because the armour, &c. must be suspended beyond the reach of busy and rude fingers, to which a hall is exposed. You understand I mean to keep lighter, smaller, and more ornate objects of curiosity in the present little room, and have only the massive and large specimens, with my fine collection of horns, &c. in the hall. Above the wainscot, I propose the wall to be planked and covered with cartridge paper, and then properly painted in wainscot, to match the arrangement beneath.

"I have now, as your own Dogberry says, bestowed all my tediousness upon you;—yet I have still a question of yours to answer on a certain bookseller's part. Unquestionably I know many interesting works of the kind he mentions, which might be translated from the German:—almost all those of Musæus, of which Beddoes made two volumes, and which are admirably written; many of La Motte Fouquè; several from the collection bearing the assumed name of Beit Weber. But there is a point more essential to their success with the British public than even the selection. There is in the German mode of narration, an affectation of deep metaphysical

reflection and protracted description and discussion, which the English do not easily tolerate; and whoever translates their narratives with effect should be master of the taste and spirit of both nations. For instance, I lately saw a translation of 'Sintram und seine Gefährten,' or Sintram and his Comrades, the story in the world which, if the plot were insinuated into the *boxes*, as Bayes says, would be most striking, translated into such English as was far more difficult to me than the original German. I do not know where an interpreter such as I point to could be found; but a literal *jog-trotter*, such as translated the passages from Goëthe annexed to the beautiful engravings, which you sent me,* would never make a profitable job. The bibliopole must lay his account to seek out a man of fancy, and pay him well. I suppose my friend Cohen† is above superintending such a work, otherwise he is the man to make something of it. Perhaps he might be induced to take it in hand for the love of the task. All who are here—namely, my lovely lady and the Lady Anne—salute you and Mrs Terry with the most sincere good wishes. Faithfully yours, W. SCOTT.

"P.S.—Direct to Edinburgh, where I shall be on the 14th. Perhaps the slightest sketch of the escri-

* I presume this alludes to the English edition of Retsch's Outlines from Faust.

† Mr Cohen is now Sir Francis Palgrave, K.H.

toire might enable me to decide. If I could swop my own, which cost me £30, it might diminish my prudential scruples. Poor little Johnnie would have offered the prime cost at once. Your letter shall go to James Ballantyne. I think I have something new likely to be actually dramatical. I will send it you presently; but, on your life, show it no one, for certain reasons. The very name is kept secret, and, strange to tell, it will be printed without one."

The precaution mentioned in this P. S. was really adopted in the printing of Quentin Durward. It had been suggested by a recent alarm about one of Ballantyne's workmen playing foul, and transmitting proof-sheets of Peveril while at press to some American pirate.

Peveril of the Peak appeared, then, in January 1823. Its reception was somewhat colder than that of its three immediate predecessors. The post-haste rapidity of the Novelist's execution was put to a severe trial, from his adoption of so wide a canvass as was presented by a period of twenty busy years, and filled by so very large and multifarious an assemblage of persons, not a few of them, as it were, struggling for prominence. Fenella was an unfortunate conception; what is good in it is not original, and the rest extravagantly absurd and incredible. Even worse was that condescension to the practice

of vulgar romancers, in his treatment of the trial scenes — scenes usually the very citadels of his strength — which outraged every feeling of probability with those who had studied the terrible tragedies of the Popish Plot, in the authentic records of, perhaps, the most disgraceful epoch in our history. The story is clumsy and perplexed; the catastrophe (another signal exception to his rules) foreseen from the beginning, and yet most inartificially brought about. All this is true; and yet might not criticisms of the same sort be applied to half the masterpieces of Shakspeare? And did any dramatist — to say nothing of any other novelist — ever produce, in spite of all the surrounding bewilderment of the fable, characters more powerfully conceived, or, on the whole, more happily portrayed, than those (I name but a few) of Christian, Bridgenorth, Buckingham, and Chiffinch — sketches more vivid than those of Young Derby, Colonel Blood, and the keeper of Newgate? The severest censor of this novel was Mr Senior; yet he was just as well as severe. He could not dismiss the work without admitting that Peveril, "though entitled to no precedency," was, on the whole, "not inferior to his brethren, taken as a class;" and upon that class he introduced a general eulogy, which I shall gratify my readers by extracting:*

* I the rather quote this criticism, as it was published in *the London Review* — a journal which stopped at the second or

"It had become a trite remark, long before there was the reason for it which now exists, that the Waverley novels are, even from their mere popularity, the most striking literary phenomena of the age. And that popularity, unequalled as it is in its extent, is perhaps more extraordinary in its permanence. It has resisted the tendency of the public, and perhaps of ourselves, much as we struggle against it, to think every subsequent work of the same author inferior to its predecessors, if it be not manifestly superior. It has resisted the satiety which might have been predicted as the necessary consequence of the frequent repetition of similar characters and situations. Above all, it has withstood *pessimum genus inimicorum laudantes.* And, in spite of acute enemies, and clumsy friends, and bungling imitators, each successive novel succeeds in obtaining a fortnight of attention as deep and as exclusive as was bestowed upon the Bride of Lammermoor, or the Heart of Mid-Lothian. We have heard this popularity accounted for in many various ways. It has been attributed to the picturesque reality of Sir Walter Scott's descriptions, to the truth and individuality of his characters, to the depth of his pathos and the gaiety of his humour, to the purity and candour of his morality, and to the clear, flexible, and lively, yet unaffected style, which is so delightful a vehicle of his more substantial merits.

"But we do not think that these qualities, even taken together, sufficiently account for such an effect as has been produced. In almost all of them he has had equals — in some, perhaps, superiors — and though we know of no writer of any age or any nation who has united all these excellences in so high a degree, their deficiencies have been balanced by strength, in what are our author's weakest points, interest and probability in the fable, and clearness of narration.

"We are inclined to suggest as the additional cause of his

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third Number, and must therefore have had a very narrow circulation.

success, the manner in which his works unite the most irreconcilable forms, and the most opposite materials. He exhibits, sometimes in succession, and sometimes intermingled, tragedy and the romance, comedy and the novel. Great events, exalted personages, and awful superstitions, have, in general, been the exclusive province of the two former. But the dignity which has been supposed to belong to those styles of writing, has in general excluded the representation of the every-day occurrences and familiar emotions, which, though parts of great events, and incident to great people, are not characteristic of either. And as human nature is principally conversant in such occurrences and emotions, it has in general been inadequately or falsely represented in tragedy and romance; inadequately by good writers, and falsely by bad — the former omitting whatever could not be made splendid and majestic, the latter exaggerating what they found really great, and attempting to give importance to what is base and trivial, and sacrificing reason and probability to render freebooters dignified, and make familiar friends converse in heroics. Homer and Euripides are the only exceptions among the ancients; and no modern tragedian, except Shakspeare, has ventured to make a king's son, 'remember that poor creature, small-beer.' Human nature, therefore, fell into the hands of comedians and novelists; but they seem either to have thought that there was something in the feelings and sufferings of ordinary mortality inconsistent with those who are made of the porcelain clay of the earth; or not to have formed sufficiently general conceptions, to venture beyond the limits of their own experience. Their characters, therefore, are copied from the originals with whom the writer, and therefore the reader, is familiar: they are placed in situations which derive no interest from their novelty; and the usual catastrophe is an event which every reader has experienced or expected.

"We may compare tragedy to a martyrdom by one of the old masters; which, whatever be its merit, represents persons, emotions, and events so remote from the experience of the spectator,

that he feels the grounds of his approbation and blame to be in a great measure conjectural. The romance, such as we generally have seen it, resembles a Gothic window-piece, where monarchs and bishops exhibit the symbols of their dignity, and saints hold out their palm branches, and grotesque monsters in blue and gold pursue one another through the intricacies of a never-ending scroll, splendid in colouring, but childish in composition, and imitating nothing in nature but a mass of drapery and jewels thrown over the commonest outlines of the human figure. The works of the comedian and novelist, in their least interesting forms, are Dutch paintings and caricatures; in their best, they are like Wilkie's earlier pictures, accurate imitations of pleasing, but familiar objects — admirable as works of art, but addressed rather to the judgment than to the imagination.

"Our author's principal agents are the mighty of the earth, often mixed, in his earlier works, with beings of more than earthly attributes. He paints the passions which arm sect against sect, party against party, and nation against nation. He relates, either episodically or as the main object of his narrative, the success or failure of those attempts which permanently affect the happiness of states; conspiracies and rebellions, civil war and religious persecution, the overthrow of dynasties and changes of belief —

> 'There saw I how the secret felon wrought,
> And treason labouring in the traitor's thought;
> On the other side there stood destruction bare,
> Unpunish'd rapine, and a waste of war;
> Contest, with sharpen'd knives in cloysters drawn,
> And all with blood bespread the holy lawn.' *

"So far he has nothing in common with the novelist or the comedian. But he writes for times when the veil of high life is rent or torn away — when all men are disposed to scrutinize, and competent to judge — when they look through and through kings and statesmen, and see that they are and act as mere men. He

* Dryden's *Palamon and Arcite, Book II*

has, therefore, treated those lofty subjects with a minuteness of detail, and an unsparing imitation of human nature, in its foibles as well as its energies, which few writers, excepting the three whom we have mentioned, have had the boldness and the philosophy to employ in the representation of exalted characters and national events. 'His story requires preachers and kings, but he thinks only on men;' and, well aware that independence and flattery must heighten every peculiarity, he has drawn in a royal personage the most laughable picture that perhaps ever was exhibited of human folly and inconsistency. By his intermixture of public and private events, he has shown how they act and re-act on one another; how results which appear, to him who views them from the distance of history, to depend on causes of slow and irresistible operation, are produced, or prevented, or modified, by the passions, the prejudices, the interests, and often the caprice of individuals; and on the other hand, how essential national tranquillity is to individual happiness — what family discord and treachery, what cruelty, what meanness, what insolence, what rapacity, what insecurity — in short, what vice and misery of every kind, must be witnessed and felt by those who have drawn the unhappy lot of existence in times of civil war and revolution.

"We have no doubt that his constant introduction of legal proceedings (a subject as carefully avoided by his predecessors) materially assists the plausibility of his narratives. In peaceful times, the law is the lever which sets in motion a great part of our actions, and regulates and controls them all. And if, in times of civil disturbance, its regular and beneficial operation be interrupted (and indeed such an interruption is the criterion, and the great mischief of civil disturbance), yet the forms of law are never in more constant use. Men who would not rob or murder, will sequestrate and condemn. The advantage, the gratification of avarice or hatred, is enjoyed by all — the responsibility is divided; since those who framed the iniquitous law have not to execute it, and those who give effect to it did not create it. The

recurrence, therefore, in our author's works, of this mainspring of human affairs, has a double effect. If the story were true, we should expect to meet with it; supposing it fictitious, we should expect it to be absent.

"An example will illustrate much of what we have tediously, and we fear obscurely, attempted to explain. We will take one from Waverley. The principal scenes are laid in a royal palace, on a field of battle where the kingdom is the stake, and at the head-quarters of a victorious army. The actors are, an exiled prince, reclaiming the sceptre of his ancestors, and the armed nobility and gentry of his kingdom. So far we are in the lofty regions of romance. And in any other hands than those of Sir Walter Scott, the language and conduct of these great people would have been as dignified as their situations. We should have heard nothing of the hero in his new costume 'majoring afore the muckle pier-glass'—of his arrest by the host of the Candlestick—of his examination by the well-powdered Major Melville—or his fears of being informed against by Mrs Nosebag. The Baron would not have claimed to draw off the princely *caligæ*. Fergus would not have been influenced, in bringing his sister to the camp, by the credit to be obtained through her beauty and accomplishments. We should not have been told of the staff-appointment refused by Waverley, or of the motives which caused him first to march with the M'Ivors, and afterwards with the Baron. In short, we should have had a uniform and imposing representation of a splendid scene, but calculated to leave false recollections with the uninstructed, and none at all with the judicious reader. But when we study the history of the rebellion in Waverley, we feel convinced that, though the details presented to us never existed, yet they must resemble what really happened; and that while the leading persons and events are as remote from those of ordinary life as the inventions of Scuderi, the picture of human nature is as faithful as could have been given by Fielding or Le Sage."

I fear the reader will hardly pardon me for bringing him down abruptly from this fine criticism to a little joke of the Parliament-House. Among its lounging young barristers of those days, Sir Walter Scott, in the intervals of his duty as clerk, often came forth and mingled much in the style of his own coeval *Mountain*. Indeed the pleasure he seemed to take in the society of his professional juniors, was one of the most remarkable, and certainly not the least agreeable features of his character at this period of his consummate honour and celebrity; but I should rather have said, perhaps, of young people generally, male or female, law or lay, gentle or simple. I used to think it was near of kin to another feature in him, his love of a bright light. It was always, I suspect, against the grain with him, when he did not even work at his desk with the sun full upon him. However, one morning soon after Peveril came out, one of our most famous wags (now famous for better things), namely, Mr Patrick Robertson, commonly called by the endearing Scottish *diminutive* "Peter," observed that tall conical white head advancing above the crowd towards the fire-place, where the usual roar of fun was going on among the briefless, and said, "Hush, boys, here comes old Peveril—I see *the Peak*." A laugh ensued, and the Great Unknown, as he withdrew from the circle after a few minutes' gossip, insisted that I should tell him what our joke upon his advent had

been. When enlightened, being by that time half way across the " babbling hall," towards his own *Division*, he looked round with a sly grin, and said, between his teeth, " Ay, ay, my man, as weel Peveril o' the Peak ony day, as Peter o' the Painch" (paunch) — which being transmitted to the brethren of *the stove school*, of course delighted all of them, except their portly Coryphæus. But *Peter's* application stuck; to his dying day, Scott was in the Outer House *Peveril of the Peak*, or *Old Peveril* — and, by and by, like a good Cavalier, he took to the designation kindly. He was well aware that his own family and younger friends constantly talked of him under this *sobriquet*. Many a little note have I had from him (and so probably has *Peter* also), reproving, or perhaps encouraging, Tory mischief, and signed, " Thine, PEVERIL."—Specimens enough will occur by and by — but I may as well transcribe one here, doggrel though it be. Calling at my house one forenoon, he had detected me in writing some nonsense for Blackwood's Noctes Ambrosianæ; and after he went home, finding an apology from some friend who had been expected to dine with a Whigish party that day in Castle Street, he despatched this billet:—

" *To J. G. Lockhart, Esq., Northumberland Street.*

" Irr coverable sinner,
Work what Whigs you please till dinner,

But be here exact at six,
Smooth as oil with mine to mix.
(Sophy may step up to tea,
Our table has no room for *she*.)
Come (your *gum* within your cheek)
And help sweet

PEVERIL OF THE PEAK.

CHAPTER LVIII.

Quentin Durward in progress — Letters to Constable, and Dr Dibdin — The Author of Waverley and the Roxburghe Club — The Bannatyne Club founded — Scott Chairman of the Edinburgh Oil Gas Company, &c. — Mechanical Devices at Abbotsford — Gasometer — Air-Bell, &c. &c. — The Bellenden Windows.

1823.

It was, perhaps, some inward misgiving towards the completion of Peveril, that determined Scott to break new ground in his next novel; and as he had before awakened a fresh interest by venturing on English scenery and history, try the still bolder experiment of a continental excursion. However this may have been, he was encouraged and strengthened by the return of his friend, Mr Skene, about this time, from a tour in France; in the course of which he had kept an accurate and lively journal, and executed a

vast variety of clever drawings, representing landscapes and ancient buildings, such as would have been most sure to interest Scott had he been the companion of his wanderings. Mr Skene's MS. collections were placed at his disposal, and he took from one of their chapters the substance of the *original* Introduction to Quentin Durward. Yet still his difficulties in this new undertaking were frequent, and of a sort to which he had hitherto been a stranger. I remember observing him many times in the Advocates' Library poring over maps and gazetteers with care and anxiety; and the following is one of many similar notes which his bookseller and printer received during the progress of the novel:—

"*To Archibald Constable, Esq.*

"Castle Street, 23d Jan. 1823.

"My Dear Constable,

"It is a vile place this village of Plessis les Tours, that can baffle both you and me. It is a place famous in history; and, moreover, is, as your Gazetteer assures us, a village of a thousand inhabitants, yet I have not found it in any map, provincial or general, which I have consulted. I think something must be found in Malte Brun's Geographical Works. I have also suggested to Mr Cadell that Wraxall's History of France, or his Travels, may probably help us. In the meantime, I am getting on; and instead

of description holding the place of sense, I must try to make such sense as I can find, hold the place of description.

" I know Hawkwood's story;* he was originally, I believe, a tailor in London, and became a noted leader of Condottieri in Italy.

" I shall be obliged to Mr David† to get from the Advocates' Library, and send me, the large copy of Philip de Commines, in 4to. I returned it, intending to bring mine from Abbotsford, but left it in my hurry; and the author is the very key to my period. —Yours ever, WALTER SCOTT.

He was much amused with a mark of French admiration which reached him (opportunely enough) about the same time — one of the few such that his

* Hawkwood — from whose adventures Constable had thought the author of Quentin Durward might take some hints — began life as apprentice to a London tailor. But, as Fuller says, " he soon turned his needle into a sword, and his thimble into a shield," and raised himself to knighthood, in the service of Edward III. After accumulating great wealth and fame in the predatory wars of Italy, he died in 1393, at Florence, where his funeral was celebrated with magnificence amidst the general lamentations of the people. — See " *The Honourable Prentice, or the Life and Death of Sir John Hawkwood,*" *&c.* London: 4to. 1615.

† Mr David Constable, eldest son of the great bookseller had been called to the Bar at Edinburgh.

novels seem to have brought him prior to the publication of Quentin Durward. I regret that I cannot produce the letter to which he alludes in the next of these notes; but I have by no means forgotten the excellent flavour of the champaign which soon afterwards arrived at Abbotsford, in a quantity greatly more liberal than had been stipulated for.

"*To A. Constable, Esq.*

"Castle Street, 16th February 1823.

"My Dear Constable,

"I send you a letter which will amuse you. It is a funny Frenchman who wants me to accept some champaign for a set of my works. I have written, in answer, that as my works cost me nothing I could not think of putting a value on them, but that I should apply to you. Send him by the mediation of Hurst & Robinson a set of my children and godchildren (poems and novels), and if he found, on seeing them, that they were worth a dozen flasks of champaign, he might address the case to Hurst & Robinson, and they would clear it at the Customhouse and send it down.

"Pray return the enclosed as a sort of curiosity. —Yours, &c. WALTER SCOTT."

A compliment not less flattering than this Frenchman's tender of champaign was paid to Scott within

a few weeks of the appearance of Peveril. In the epistle introductory of that novel, Captain Clutterbuck amuses Dr Jonas Dryasdust with an account of a recent visit from their common parent "the Author of Waverley," whose outward man, as it was in those days, is humorously caricatured, with a suggestion that he had probably sat to Geoffrey Crayon for his "Stout Gentleman of No. II."; and who is made to apologize for the heartiness with which he pays his duty to the viands set before him, by alleging that he was in training for the approaching anniversary of the Roxburghe Club, whose gastronomical zeal had always been on a scale worthy of their bibliomaniacal renown. "He was preparing himself," said the gracious and portly *Eidolon*, "to hob-nob with the lords of the literary treasures of Althorpe and Hodnet in Madeira negus, brewed by the classical Dibdin"—[why *negus?*]—"to share those profound debates which stamp accurately on each 'small volume, dark with tarnished gold,' its collar, not of S.S., but of R.R.—to toast the immortal memory of Caxton, Valderfer, Pynson, and the other fathers of that great art which has made all and each of us what we are." This drollery in fact alluded, not to the Roxburghe Club, but to an institution of the same class which was just at this time springing into life, under Sir Walter's own auspices, in Edinburgh—the *Bannatyne Club*, of which he was the founder and first president. The

heroes of the Roxburghe, however, were not to penetrate the mystification of Captain Clutterbuck's report, and from their jovial and erudite board, when they next congregated around its "generous flasks of Burgundy, each flanked by an uncut fifteener"—(so I think their reverend chronicler has somewhere depicted the apparatus)—the following despatch was forwarded:—

"*To Sir Walter Scott, Bart., Edinburgh.*

"Feb. 22, 1823.

"My Dear Sir,

"The death of Sir M. M. Sykes, Bart., having occasioned a vacancy in our ROXBURGHE CLUB, I am desired to request that you will have the goodness to make that fact known to the AUTHOR OF WAVERLEY, who, from the Prologue to PEVERIL OF THE PEAK, seems disposed to become one of the members thereof; and I am further desired to express the wishes of the said CLUB that the said AUTHOR may succeed to the said Baronet.—I am ever most sincerely yours, T. F. DIBDIN, V. P"

Sir Walter's answers to this, and to a subsequent letter of the Vice-President, announcing his formal election were as follows:—

"*To the Rev. Thomas Frognall Dibdin, &c. &c. Kensington.*

"Edin. Feb. 25, 1823.

"My Dear Sir,

"I was duly favoured with your letter, which proves one point against the unknown Author of Waverley; namely, that he is certainly a Scotsman, since no other nation pretends to the advantage of second sight. Be he who or where he may, he must certainly feel the very high honour which has selected him, *nominis umbra*, to a situation so worthy of envy.

"As his personal appearance in the fraternity is not like to be a speedy event, one may presume he may be desirous of offering some token of his gratitude in the shape of a reprint, or such-like kickshaw, and for this purpose you had better send me the statutes of your learned body, which I will engage to send him in safety.

"It will follow as a characteristic circumstance, that the table of the Roxburghe, like that of King Arthur, will have a vacant chair, like that of Banquo at Macbeth's banquet. But if this author, who 'hath fernseed and walketh invisible,' should not appear to claim it before I come to London (should I ever be there again), with permission of the Club, I who have something of adventure in me, although a knight like Sir Andrew Aguecheek, 'dubbed with unhacked

rapier, and on carpet consideration,'* would, rather than lose the chance of a dinner with the Roxburghe Club, take upon me the adventure of the *siege perilous*, and reap some amends for perils and scandals into which the invisible champion has drawn me, by being his *locum tenens* on so distinguished an occasion.

"It will be not uninteresting to you to know, that a fraternity is about to be established here something on the plan of the Roxburghe Club; but, having Scottish antiquities chiefly in view, it is to be called the Bannatyne Club, from the celebrated antiquary, George Bannatyne, who compiled by far the greatest record of old Scottish poetry. The first meeting is to be held on Thursday, when the health of the Roxburghe Club will be drunk.—I am always, my dear sir, your most faithful humble servant,

WALTER SCOTT."

"*To the Same.*

"Abbotsford, May 1, 1823.

"My Dear Sir,

"I am duly honoured with your very interesting and flattering communication. Our Highlanders have a proverbial saying, founded on the traditional renown of Fingal's dog; 'If it is not Bran,' they say, 'it is Bran's brother.' Now, this is always

* *Twelfth Night, Act III. Scene 4.*

taken as a compliment of the first class, whether applied to an actual cur, or parabolically to a biped; and, upon the same principle, it is with no small pride and gratification that I hear the Roxburghe Club have been so very flatteringly disposed to accept me as a *locum tenens* for the unknown author whom they have made the child of their adoption. As sponsor, I will play my part until the real Simon Pure make his appearance.

"Besides, I hope the devil does not owe me such a shame. Mad Tom tells us, that 'the Prince of Darkness is a gentleman;'* and this mysterious personage will, I hope, partake as much of his honourable feelings as of his invisibility, and, retaining his incognito, permit me to enjoy, in his stead, an honour which I value more than I do that which has been bestowed on me by the credit of having written any of his novels.

"I regret deeply I cannot soon avail myself of my new privileges; but courts, which I am under the necessity of attending officially, sit down in a few days, and, *hëi mihi!* do not arise for vacation until July. But I hope to be in town next spring; and certainly I have one strong additional reason for a London journey, furnished by the pleasure of meeting the Roxburghe Club. Make my most respectful compliments to the members at their next merry-meeting; and express, in the warmest manner, my

* *King Lear, Act III. Scene 5.*

sense of obligation.—I am always, my dear sir, very much your most obedient servant,

WALTER SCOTT."

In his way of taking both the Frenchman's civilities and those of the Roxburghers, we see evident symptoms that the mask had begun to be worn rather carelessly. He would not have written this last letter, I fancy, previous to the publication of Mr Adolphus's Essays on the Authorship of Waverley.

Sir Walter, it may be worth mentioning, was also about this time elected a member of "THE CLUB" —that famous one established by Johnson, Burke, and Reynolds, at the Turk's Head, but which has now for a long series of years held its meetings at the Thatched House, in St James's Street. Moreover, he had been chosen, on the death of the antiquary Lysons, Professor of Ancient History to the Royal Academy—a chair originally founded at Dr Johnson's suggestion, "in order that *Goldy* might have a right to be at their dinners," and in which Goldsmith has had several illustrious successors besides Sir Walter. I believe he was present at more than one of the festivals of each of these fraternities. A particular dinner of the Royal Academy, at all events, is recorded with some picturesque details in his essay on the life of his friend John Kemble, who sat next to him upon that occasion.

The Bannatyne Club was a child of his own, and

from first to last he took a most fatherly concern in all its proceedings. His practical sense dictated a direction of their funds widely different from what had been adopted by the Roxburghe. Their *Club Books* already constitute a very curious and valuable library of Scottish history and antiquities: their example has been followed with not inferior success by the Maitland Club of Glasgow—which was soon afterwards instituted on a similar model, and of which also Sir Walter was a zealous associate; and since his death a third Club of this class, founded at Edinburgh in his honour, and styled *The Abbotsford Club*, has taken a still wider range—not confining their printing to works connected with Scotland, but admitting all materials that can throw light on the ancient history or literature of any country, anywhere described or discussed by the Author of Waverley.

At the meetings of the Bannatyne he regularly presided from 1823 to 1831; and in the chair on their anniversary dinners, surrounded by some of his oldest and dearest friends—Thomas Thomson (the Vice-President), John Clerk (Lord Eldin), the Chief Commissioner Adam, the Chief Baron Shepherd, Lord Jeffrey, Mr Constable—and let me not forget his kind, intelligent, and industrious ally, Mr David Laing, bookseller, the Secretary of the Club—he from this time forward was the unfailing source and centre of all sorts of merriment "within

the limits of becoming mirth." Of the origin and early progress of their institution, the reader has a full account in his reviewal of Pitcairn's Ancient Criminal Trials of Scotland, the most important work as yet edited for the Bannatyne press;* and the last edition of his Poems includes his excellent song composed for their first dinner—that of March 9, 1823—and then sung by James Ballantyne, and heartily chorused by all the aforesaid dignitaries:—

"Assist me, ye friends of old books and old wine,
To sing in the praises of Sage Bannatyne,
Who left such a treasure of old Scottish lore,
As enables each age to print one volume more.
One volume more, my friends—one volume more,
We'll ransack old Banny for one volume more."—&c.

On the morning after that first Bannatyne Club dinner, Scott sent such of the Waverley MSS. as he had in Castle Street to Mr Constable, with this note:—

"Edinburgh, 10th March 1823.

"Dear Constable,

"You, who have so richly endowed my little collection, cannot refuse me the pleasure of adding to yours. I beg your acceptance of a parcel of MSS., which I know your partialities will give more value to than they deserve; and only annex the con-

* See Miscellaneous Prose Works, vol. xxi. p. 199.

dition, that they shall be scrupulously concealed during the author's life, and only made forthcoming when it may be necessary to assert his right to be accounted the writer of these novels.

"I enclose a note to Mr Guthrie Wright, who will deliver to you some others of those MSS. which were in poor Lord Kinnedder's possession; and a few more now at Abbotsford, which I can send in a day or two, will, I think, nearly complete the whole, though there may be some leaves missing.

"I hope you are not the worse of our very merry party yesterday.—Ever yours truly,

WALTER SCOTT."

Various passages in Scott's correspondence have recalled to my recollection the wonder with which the friends best acquainted with the extent of his usual engagements observed, about this period, his readiness in mixing himself up with the business of associations far different from the Bannatyne Club I cannot doubt that his conduct as President of the Royal Society, and as manager of the preparations for the King's visit, had a main influence in this matter. In both of these capacities he had been thrown into contact with many of the most eminent of his fellow-citizens, who had previously seen little of him personally—including several, and those of especial consequence, who had been accustomed to flavour all their notions of him with something of

the gall of local partisanship in politics. The inimitable mixture of sagacity, discretion, and gentleness, which characterised all his intercourse with mankind, was soon appreciated by the gentlemen to whom I allude; for not a few of them had had abundant opportunities of observing and lamenting the ease with which ill humours are engendered, to the disturbance of all really useful discussion, wherever social equals assemble in conclave, without having some official preses, uniting the weight of strong and quick intellect, with the calmness and moderation of a brave spirit, and the conciliating grace of habitual courtesy. No man was ever more admirably qualified to contend with the difficulties of such a situation. Presumption, dogmatism, and arrogance, shrunk from the overawing contrast of his modest greatness: the poison of every little passion was shamed and neutralized beneath the charitable dignity of his penetration: and jealousy, fretfulness, and spleen, felt themselves transmuted in the placid atmosphere of good sense, good humour, and good manners. And whoever might be apt to plead off on the score of harassing and engrossing personal duty of any sort, Scott had always leisure as well as temper at command, when invited to take part in any business connected with any rational hope of public advantage. These things opened, like the discovery of some new and precious element of wealth, upon certain eager spirits who considered

the Royal Society as the great local parent and minister of practical inventions and mechanical improvements; and they found it no hard matter to inspire their genial chief with a warm sympathy in not a few of their then predominant speculations. He was invited, for example, to place himself at the head of a new company for improving the manufacture of oil gas, and in the spring of this year began to officiate regularly in that capacity. Other associations of a like kind called for his countenance, and received it. The fame of his ready zeal and happy demeanour grew and spread; and from this time, until bodily infirmities disabled him, Sir Walter occupied, as the most usual, acceptable, and successful chairman of public meetings of almost every conceivable sort, apart from politics, a very prominent place among the active citizens of his native town. Any foreign student of statistics who should have happened to peruse the files of an Edinburgh newspaper for the period to which I allude, would, I think, have concluded that there must be at least two Sir Walter Scotts in the place—one the miraculously fertile author whose works occupied two-thirds of its literary advertisements and critical columns—another some retired magistrate or senator of easy fortune and indefatigable philanthropy, who devoted the rather oppressive leisure of an honourable old age to the promotion of patriotic ameliorations, the watch-

ful guardianship of charities, and the ardent patronage of educational institutions.

The reader will perceive in the correspondence to which I must return, hints about various little matters connected with Scott's own advancing edifice on Tweedside, in which he may trace the President of the Royal Society, and the Chairman of the Gas Company.

Thus, on the 14th of February, he recurs to the plan of heating interiors by steam — and proceeds with other topics of a similar class: —

"*To D. Terry, Esq., London.*

"Dear Terry,

"I will not fail to send Mr Atkinson, so soon as I can get it, a full account of Mr Holdsworth of Glasgow's improved use of steam, which is in great acceptation. Being now necessarily sometimes with men of science, I hear a great deal of these matters; and, like Don Diego Snapshorto with respect to Greek, though I do not understand them, I like the sound of them. I have got a capital stove (proved and exercised by Mr Robison,* who is such a mechanical genius as his father, the celebrated professor) for the lower part of the house, with a

* Now Sir John Robison, son of the author of "Elements of Mechanical Philosophy," &c. He is Secretary of the Royal Society of Edinburgh.—[1839.]

communication for ventilating in the summer. Moreover, I have got for one or two of the rooms a new sort of bell, which I think would divert you. There is neither wire nor crank of any kind; the whole consisting of a tube of tin, such as is used for gas, having at one extremity a cylinder of wider dimensions, and in the other a piece of light wood. The larger cylinder — suppose an inch and a half in diameter — terminates in the apartment, and, ornamented as you please, is the handle, as it were, of the bell. By pressing a piston down into this upper and wider cylinder, the air through the tube, to a distance of a hundred feet if necessary, is suddenly compressed, which compression throws out the light piece of wood, which strikes the bell. The power of compression is exactly like that of the Bramah patent — the acting element being air instead of water. The bell may act as a telegraph by sinking once, twice, thrice, or so forth. The great advantage, however, is, that it never can go out of order — needs no cranks, or pullies, or wires — and can be contorted into any sort of twining or turning which convenience of communication may require, being simply an air-tight tube. It might be used to communicate with the stable, and I think of something of that kind — with the porter's lodge — with the gardener's house. I have a model now in the room with me. The only thing I have not explained is, that a small spring raises the piston B

when pressed down. I wish you would show this to Mr Atkinson: if he has not seen it, he will be delighted. I have tried it on a tube of fifty feet, and it never fails, indeed *cannot*. It may be called the *ne plus ultra* of bell-ringing—the pea-gun principle, as one may say. As the bell is stationary, it might be necessary (were more than one used) that a little medallion should be suspended in such a manner as to be put in vibration, so as to show the servant which bell has been struck.—I think we have spoke of well-nigh all the commodities wanted at Conundrum Castle worth mentioning. Still there are the carpets.

"I have no idea my present labours will be dramatic in situation: as to character, that of Louis XI., the sagacious, perfidious, superstitious, jocular, and politic tyrant, would be, for a historical chronicle, containing *his life and death*, one of the most powerful ever brought on the stage.—Yours truly,

W. Scott."

A few weeks later, he says to the same correspondent—"I must not omit to tell you that my gas establishment is in great splendour, and working, now that the expense of the apparatus is in a great measure paid, very easily and very cheaply. In point of economy, however, it is not so effective; for the facility of procuring it encourages to a great profusion of light: but then a gallon of the basest train-

oil, which is used for preference, makes a hundred feet of gas, and treble that quantity lights the house in the state of an illumination for the expense of about 3s. 6d. In our new mansion we should have been ruined with spermaceti oil and wax-candles, yet had not one-tenth part of the light. Besides, we are entirely freed from the great plague of cleaning lamps, &c. There is no smell whatever, unless a valve is left open, and the gas escapes unconsumed, in which case the scent occasions its being instantly discovered. About twice a-week the gas is made by an ordinary labourer, under occasional inspection of the gardener. It takes about five hours to fill the reservoir gasometer. I never saw an invention more completely satisfactory in the results."

I cannot say that Sir Walter's "century of inventions" at Abbotsford turned out very happily. His new philosophical *ne plus ultra* of bells was found in the sequel a poor succedaneum for the old-fashioned mechanism of the simple wire; and his application of gas-light to the interior of a dwelling-house was in fact attended with so many inconveniences, that erelong all his family heartily wished it had never been thought of. Moreover, Sir Walter had deceived himself as to the expense of such an apparatus when maintained for the uses of a single domestic establishment. He easily made out that his gas *per se* cost him less than the wax, oil, and tal-

low, requisite to produce an equal quantity of light, would have done; but though he admitted that no such quantity of artificial light was necessary either for comfort or splendour, nor would ever have been dreamt of had its supply been to come from the chandler's store, "the state of an illumination" was almost constantly kept up. Above all, he seems to have, by some trickery of the imagination, got rid in his estimate of all memory of the very considerable sum expended on the original fabric and furnishing of his gasometer, and lining wall upon wall with so many hundreds, perhaps thousands, of feet of delicate pipe work, — and, in like manner, to have counted for nothing the fact that he had a workman of superior character employed during no slender portion of every year in the manufacture. He himself, as has been mentioned before, delighted at all times in a strong light, and was not liable to much annoyance from the delicacy of his olfactory-nerves. To the extremes of heat and cold, too, he was nearly indifferent. But the blaze and glow, and occasional odour of gas, when spread over every part of a private house, will ever constitute a serious annoyance for the majority of men — still more so of women — and in a country place, where skilful repair, in case of accident, cannot be immediately procured, the result is often a misery. The effect of the new apparatus in the dining-room at Abbotsford was at first superb. In sitting down to table, in Autumn,

no one observed that in each of three chandeliers (one of them being of very great dimensions) there lurked a little tiny bead of red light. Dinner passed off, and the sun went down, and suddenly, at the turning of a screw, the room was filled with a gush of splendour worthy of the palace of Aladdin; but, as in the case of Aladdin, the old lamp would have been better in the upshot. Jewelry sparkled, but cheeks and lips looked cold and wan in this fierce illumination; and the eye was wearied, and the brow ached, if the sitting was at all protracted. I confess, however, that my chief enmity to the whole affair arises from my conviction that Sir Walter's own health was damaged, in his latter years, in consequence of his habitually working at night under the intense and burning glare of a broad star of gas, which hung, as it were, in the air, immediately over his writing table.

These philosophical novelties were combined with curiously heterogeneous features of decoration;—*e. g.*—

"*To the Lord Montagu, &c., Ditton Park. Windsor.*

"Edinburgh, February 20, 1823.

"My Dear Lord,

"I want a little sketch of your Lordship's arms, on the following account:—You are to know that I

have a sort of entrance-gallery, in which I intend to hang up my old armour, at least the heavier parts of it, with sundry skins, horns, and such like affairs. That the two windows may be in unison, I intend to sport a little painted glass, and as I think heraldry is always better than any other subject, I intend that the upper compartment of each window shall have the shield, supporters, &c. of one of the existing dignitaries of the clan of Scott; and, of course, the Duke's arms and your Lordship's will occupy two such posts of distinction. The corresponding two will be Harden's and Thirlestane's,* the only families now left who have a right to be regarded as chieftains; and the lower compartments of each window will contain eight shields (without accompaniments), of good gentlemen of the name, of whom I can still muster sixteen bearing separate coats of arms. There is a little conceit in all this, but I have long got beyond the terror of

> 'Lord, what will all the people say!
> Mr Mayor, Mr Mayor?'

and, like an obstinate old-fashioned Scotchman, I

* Lord Napier has his peerage, as well as the corresponding surname, from a female ancestor; in the male blood he is *Scott, Baronet of Thirlestane*—and indeed some antiquaries of no mean authority consider him as now the male representative of Buccleuch. I need not remind the reader that both Harden and Thirlestane make a great figure in the Lay of the Last Minstrel.

buckle my belt my ain gate,—and so I will have my *Bellenden* windows.*—Ever yours faithfully,

WALTER SCOTT."

The following letter, addressed to the same nobleman at his seat in the New Forest, opens with a rather noticeable paragraph. He is anxious that the guardian of Buccleuch should not omit the opportunity of adding another farm in Dumfries-shire, to an estate which already covered the best part of three or four counties!

"*To the Lord Montagu, &c., &c., Beaulieu Abbey, Hants.*

"June 18th, 1823.

"My Dear Lord,

"Your kind letter reached me just when, with my usual meddling humour, I was about to poke your Lordship on the subject of the farm near Drumlanrig. I see officially that the upset price is reduced. Now, surely you will not let it slip you: the other lots have all gone higher than valuation, so, therefore, it is to be supposed the estimation cannot be very much out of the way, and surely, as running absolutely into sight of that fine castle, it should be the Duke's at all events. Think of a vile four-cornered house, with plantations laid out after

* *Bellenden* was the old war-cry of Buccleuch.

the fashion of scollops (as the women call them) and pocket handkerchiefs, cutting and disfiguring the side of the hill, in constant view. The small property has a tendency to fall into the great one, as the small drop of water, as it runs down the pane of a carriage-window, always joins the larger. But this may not happen till we are all dead and gone; and N O W are three important letters of the alphabet, mighty slippery, and apt to escape the grasp.

"I was much interested by your Lordship's account of Beaulieu; I have seen it from the water, and admired it very much, but I remember being told an evil genius haunted it in the shape of a low fever, to which the inhabitants were said to be subject. The woods were the most noble I ever saw. The disappearance of the ancient monastic remains may be accounted for on the same principle as elsewhere—a desire of the grantees of the Crown to secularize the appearance of the property, and remove at least the external evidence that it had ever been dedicated to religious uses—pretty much on the principle on which the light-fingered gentry melt plate so soon as it comes into their possession, and give the original metal a form which renders it more difficult to re-assume it—this is a most unsavoury simile. The various mutations in religion, and consequently in property of this kind, recommended such policy. Your Lordship cannot but remember

the Earl of Pembroke, in Edward the Sixth's time, expelling the nuns from Wilton—then in Queen Mary's re-inducting them into their nunnery, himself meeting the abbess, barefooted and in sackcloth, in penance for his sacrilege—and finally, again turning the said abbess and her vassals adrift in the days of good Queen Bess, with the wholesome admonition—'Go spin, you jades, go spin.' Something like the system of demolition which probably went on during these uncertain times, was practised by what was called in France La Bande Noire, who bought chateaux and abbeys, and pulling them down, sold the materials for what they would bring—which was sometimes sufficient to help well towards payment of the land, when the assignats were at an immense depreciation.

"I should like dearly to have your Lordship's advice about what I am now doing here, knowing you to be one of those

'Who in trim gardens take their pleasure.'*

I am shutting my house in with a court-yard, the interior of which is to be laid out around the drive in flower-plots and shrubbery, besides a trellised walk. This I intend to connect with my gardens, and obtain, if possible, something *(parvum componere magnis)*, like the comfort of Ditton, so preferable to the tame and poor waste of grass and gravel by

* Milton's *Il Penseroso*, ver. 50

which modern houses are surrounded. I trust to see you all here in autumn.—Ever yours faithfully,

W. Scott."

In answering the foregoing letter, Lord Montagu mentioned to Scott the satisfaction he had recently had in placing his nephew the Duke of Buccleuch under the care of Mr Blakeney, an accomplished gentleman and old friend, who had been his own fellow-student at Cambridge. He also rallied the poet a little on his yearning for acres; and hinted that that craving is apt to draw inconveniently even on a ducal revenue. Scott says in reply—

"*To the Lord Montagu, &c., &c.*

"My Dear Lord,

"I am delighted that you have got such a tutor for Walter as entirely satisfies a person so well acquainted with mankind as your Lordship; and I am not afraid that a friend of yours should be imbued with any of very dangerous qualities, which are sometimes found in the instructors placed around our noble youths. Betwixt a narrow-minded pedantry, which naturally disgusts a young man, and the far more formidable vices of flattery, assentation, and self-seeking of all kinds, there are very few of the class of men who are likely to adopt the situation of tutor, that one is not afraid to trust near the per

son of a boy of rank and fortune. I think it is an argument of your friend's good sense and judgment, that he thinks the knowledge of domestic history essential to his pupil. It is in fact the accomplishment which, of all others, comes most home to the business and breast of a public man—and the Duke of Buccleuch can never be regarded as a private one. Besides, it has, in a singular degree, the tendency to ripen men's judgment upon the wild political speculations now current. Any one who will read Clarendon with attention and patience, may regard, *veluti in speculo*, the form and pressure of our own times, if you will just place the fanaticism of atheism and irreligion instead of that of enthusiasm, and combine it with the fierce thirst after innovation proper to both ages. Men of very high rank are, I have noticed, in youth peculiarly accessible to the temptations held out to their inexperience by the ingenious arguers upon speculative politics. There is popularity to be obtained by listening to these lecturers—there is also an idea of generosity, and independence, and public spirit, in affecting to hold cheap the privileges which are peculiarly their own—and there may spring in some minds the idea (a very vain one) that the turret would seem higher, and more distinguished, if some parts of the building that overtop it were pulled down. I have no doubt Mr Blakeney is aware of all this, and will take his own time and manner in leading our young friend to

draw from history, in his own way, inferences which may apply to his own times. I will consider anxiously what your Lordship mentions about a course of Scottish study. We are still but very indifferently provided with Scotch histories of a general description.* Lord Hailes' Annals are the foundation-stone, and an excellent book, though dryly written. Pinkerton, in two very unreadable quartos, which yet abound in information, takes up the thread where Hailes drops it — and then you have Robertson, down to the Union of the crowns. But I would beware of task-work, which Pinkerton at least must always be, and I would relieve him every now and then by looking at the pages of old Pitscottie, where events are told with so much *naïveté*, and even humour, and such individuality as it were, that it places the actors and scenes before the reader. The whole history of James V. and Queen Mary may be read to great advantage in the elegant Latin of Lesly, Bishop of Ross, and collated with the account which

* See some remarks on the Scottish historians in Sir Walter's reviewal of the first and second volumes of Mr P. F. Tytler's elaborate work—a work which he had meant to criticize throughout in similar detail, for he considered it as a very important one in itself, and had, moreover, a warm regard for the author — the son of his early friend Lord Woodhouselee. His own Tales of a Grandfather have, however unambitiously undertaken, supplied a more just and clear guide of Scottish history to the general reader, than any one could have pointed out at the time when this letter was addressed to Lord Montagu.

his opponent Buchanan, in language still more classical, gives of the same eventful reigns. Laing is but a bad guide through the seventeenth century, yet I hardly know where a combined account of these events is to be had, so far as Scotland is concerned, and still less where we could recommend to the young Duke an account of Scottish jurisprudence that is not too technical. All this I will be happy to talk over with your Lordship; for that our young friend should possess this information in a general way is essential to his own comfort and the welfare of many.

"About the land I have no doubt your Lordship is quite right, but I have something of what is called the *yeard hunger*.* I dare say you will get the other lots *à bon marché*, when you wish to have them; and, to be sure, a ducal dignity is a monstrous beast for devouring ready cash. I do not fear, on the part of Duke Walter, those ills which might arise to many from a very great command of ready money, which sometimes makes a young man, like a horse too full of spirits, make too much play at starting, and flag afterwards. I think improvident expenditure will not be his fault, though I have no doubt he will have the generous temper of his father

* "*Yerd-hunger*—that keen desire of food which is sometimes manifested by persons before death, viewed as a presage that the *yerd*, or grave, is calling for them as its prey."—*Jamieson's Dictionary, Supplement.*

and grandfather, with more means to indulge an expense which has others for its object more than mere personal gratification. This I venture to foretell, and hope to see the accomplishment of my prophecy: few things could give me more pleasure.

"My court-yard rises, but masons, of all men but lovers, love the most to linger ere they depart. Two men are now tapping upon the summit of my gate as gently as if they were laying the foundation-stone of a Methodist meeting-house, and one plumber 'sits, sparrow-like, companionless,'* upon the top of a turret which should have been finished a month since. I must go, and, as Judge Jefferies used to express it, give them a lick with the rough side of my tongue, which will relieve your Lordship sooner than might otherwise have been.

"Melrose is looking excellently well. I begin to think taking off the old roof would have hurt it, at least externally, by diminishing its effect on the eye. The lowering the roofs of the aisles has had a most excellent effect. Sir Adam is well, and his circle augmented by his Indian brother, Major Fergusson, who has much of the family manners—an excellent importation, of course, to Tweedside.—Ever yours truly, W. SCOTT."

In April of this year, Sir Walter heard of the death of his dear brother Thomas Scott, whose son

* Psalm cii. ver. 7.

had been for two years domesticated with him at Abbotsford, and the rest of that family were soon afterwards his guests for a considerable time. Among other visitants of the same season were Miss Edgeworth, and her sisters Harriet and Sophia. After spending a few weeks in Edinburgh, and making a tour into the Highlands, they gave a fortnight to Abbotsford; and thenceforth the correspondence between Scott and the most distinguished of contemporary novelists, was of that confiding and affectionate character which we have seen largely exemplified in his intercourse with Joanna Baillie. His first impressions of his new friend are given in this letter to Mr Terry.

"*To D. Terry, Esq., London.*

"Castle Street, June 18, 1823.

"My marbles, my marbles! O what must now be done?
My drawing-room is finish'd off, but marbles there are none.
My marbles! my marbles! I fancied them so fine,
The marbles of Lord Elgin were but a joke to mine.*

"In fact we are all on tip-toe now for the marbles and the chimney-grates, which being had and obtained, we will be less clamorous about other matters. I have very little news to send you: Miss Edgeworth is at present the great lioness of Edinburgh, and a

* Sir Walter is parodying the Spanish Ballad "My ear-rings! my ear-rings are dropt into the well," &c.

very nice lioness; she is full of fun and spirit; a little slight figure, very active in her motions, very good-humoured, and full of enthusiasm. Your descriptions of the chiffonieres made my mouth water: but Abbotsford has cost rather too much for one year, with the absolutely necessary expenses, and I like to leave something to succeeding years, when we may be better able to afford to get our matters made tasty. Besides, the painting of the house should be executed before much curious furniture be put in; next spring, perhaps, we may go prowling together through the brokers' purlieus. I enclose you a plan of my own for a gallery round my own room, which is to combine that advantage with a private staircase at the same time, leaving me possession of my oratory; this will be for next year — but I should like to take Mr Atkinson's sentiments about it. Somebody told me, I trust inaccurately, that he had not been well. I have not heard of him for some time, and I owe him (besides much kindness which can only be paid with gratitude) the suitable compensation for his very friendly labours in my behalf. I wish you would poke him a little, with all delicacy, on this subject. We are richer than when Abbotsford first began, and have engrossed a great deal of his most valuable time. I think you will understand the plan perfectly. A private staircase comes down from my dressing-room, and opens upon a book-gallery; the landing-

place forms the top of the oratory, leaving that cabinet seven feet high; then there is a staircase in the closet which corresponds with the oratory, which you attain by walking round the gallery. This staircase might be made to hang on the door and pull out when it is opened, which is the way abroad with an *escalier derobé*.* I might either put shelves under the gallery, or place some of my cabinets there, or partly both. — Kind compliments to Mrs Terry, in which all join. Yours most truly,

W. Scott.

"P. S. — The quantity of horns that I have for the hal. would furnish the whole world of cuckoldom; arrived this instant a new cargo of them, Lord knows from whence. I opened the box, thinking it might be the damask, and found it full of sylvan spoils. Has an old-fashioned consulting desk ever met your eye in your rambles? I mean one of those which have four faces, each forming an inclined plane, like a writing-desk, and made to turn round as well as to rise, and be depressed by a strong iron screw in the centre, something like a one-clawed table; they are old-fashioned, but choicely convenient, as you can keep three or four books, folios if you like, open for reference. If you have not seen one, I can get one

* Sir Walter had in his mind a favourite cabinet of Napoleon's at the *Elysée Bourbon*, where there are a gallery and concealed staircase such as he here describes.

made to a model in the Advocates' Library. Some sort of contrivances there are, too, for displaying prints, all which would be convenient in so large a room, but can be got in time."

CHAPTER LIX.

Quentin Durward published — Transactions with Constable — Dialogues on Superstition proposed — Article on Romance written — St Ronan's Well begun — "Melrose in July" — Abbotsford visited by Miss Edgeworth, and by Mr Adolphus — His Memoranda — Excursion to Allanton — Anecdotes — Letters to Miss Baillie, Miss Edgeworth, Mr Terry, &c. — Publication of St Ronan's Well.

1823.

A DAY or two after the date of the preceding letter, Quentin Durward was published; and surpassing as its popularity was eventually, Constable, who was in London at the time, wrote in cold terms of its immediate reception.

Very shortly before the bookseller left Edinburgh for that trip, he had concluded another bargain (his last of the sort) for the purchase of Waverley copy-

rights—acquiring the author's property in the Pirate, Nigel, Peveril, and also Quentin Durward, out and out, at the price of five thousand guineas. He had thus paid for the copyright of novels (over and above the half profits of the early separate editions) the sum of £22,500; and his advances upon "works of fiction" still in embryo, amounted at this moment to £10,000 more. He began, in short, and the wonder is that he began so late, to suspect that the process of creation was moving too rapidly. The publication of different sets of the novels in a collective form may probably have had a share in opening his eyes to the fact, that the voluminousness of an author is anything but favourable to the rapid diffusion of his works as library books—the great object with any publisher who aspires at founding a solid fortune. But he merely intimated on this occasion that he thought the pecuniary transactions between Scott and himself had gone to such an extent, that, considering the usual chances of life and health, he must decline contracting for any more novels until those already bargained for should have been written.

Scott himself appears to have admitted for a moment the suspicion that he had been overdoing in the field of romance; and opened to Constable the scheme of a work on popular superstitions, in the form of dialogue, for which he had long possessed ample materials in his thorough mastery of perhaps

the most curious library of *diablerie* that ever man collected. But before Constable had leisure to consider this proposal in all its bearings, Quentin Durward, from being, as Scott expressed it, *frost-bit*, had emerged into most fervid and flourishing life. In fact, the sensation which this novel, on its first appearance, created in Paris, was extremely similar to that which attended the original Waverley in Edinburgh, and Ivanhoe afterwards in London. For the first time Scott had ventured on foreign ground, and the French public, long wearied of the pompous tragedians and feeble romancers, who had alone striven to bring out the ancient history and manners of their country in popular forms, were seized with a fever of delight when Louis XI. and Charles the Bold started into life again at the beck of the Northern Magician. Germany had been fully awake to his merits years before, but the public there also felt their sympathies appealed to with hitherto unmatched strength and effect. The infection of admiration ran far and wide on the Continent, and soon re-acted most potently upon Britain. Discussing the various fortunes of these novels a few years after, Mr Senior says—

"Almost all the characters in his other novels are drawn from British history or from British domestic life. That they should delight nations differing so much from ourselves and from one another in habits and in literary taste, who cannot appreciate the imitation of our existing manners, or join in our historical asso-

ciations; that the head of 'Le Sieur Valtere Skote' should be pointed out by a Hungarian tradesmen as the portrait of 'l'homme le plus célèbre en l'Europe;' that his works should employ the translators and printers of Leipsic and Paris, and even relieve the ennui of a Rothenturn quarantine on the extreme borders of European civilization, is, as Dr Walsh* has well observed, the strongest proof that their details are founded on deep knowledge of the human character, and of the general feelings recognised by all. But Quentin Durward has the additional advantage of scenery and characters possessing European interest. It presents to the inhabitants of the Netherlands and of France, the most advanced of the continental nations, a picture of the manners of their ancestors, incomparably more vivid and more detailed than is to be found in any other narrative, either fictitious or real: and that picture is dignified by the introduction of persons whose influence has not even yet ceased to operate.

"Perhaps at no time did the future state of Europe depend more on the conduct of two individuals than when the crown of France and the coronet of Burgundy descended on Louis XI. and Charles the Bold. The change from real to nominal sovereignty, which has since been the fate of the empire of Germany, was then impending over the kingdom of France And if that throne had been filled at this critical period, by a monarch with less courage, less prudence, or more scrupulous than Louis, there seems every reason to suppose that the great feudatories would have secured their independence, and the greater part of that country might now be divided into many petty principalities, some Catholic, and some Protestant, principally intent on excluding each other's commodities, and preventing the mutual ruin which would have been predicted as the necessary consequence of a free trade between Gascony and Languedoc.

"On the other hand, if the race of excellent sovereigns who governed Burgundy for a hundred and twenty years had been con

* See Walsh's Journey to Constantinople.

tinued — or, indeed, if Duke Philip had been followed by almost any other person than his brutal son, the rich and extensive countries, which under his reign constituted the most powerful state in Europe, must soon have been formed into an independent monarchy — a monarchy far greater and better consolidated than the artificial kingdom lately built up out of their fragments, and kept together rather by the pressure of surrounding Europe than by any internal principles of cohesion.* From the times of Louis XI. until now, France has been the master-spring in European politics, and Flanders merely an arena for combat. The imagination is bewildered by an attempt to speculate on the course which human affairs might have taken if the commencement of the fifteenth century had found the Low Countries, Burgundy, and Artois, one great kingdom, and Normandy, Brittany, Provence, and the other fiefs of the French crown, independent principalities.

"In addition to their historical interest, Sir Walter had the good fortune to find in Charles and Louis characters as well contrasted as if they had been invented for the purposes of fiction. Both were indeed utterly selfish, but there the resemblance ends. The Duke's ruling principle was vanity, and vanity of the least intellectual kind. His first object was the fame of a conqueror, or rather of a soldier, for in his battles he seems to have aimed more at showing courage and personal strength than the calmness and combination of a general. His other great source of delight was the exhibition of his wealth and splendour, — in the pomp of his dress and his retinue. In these ignoble pursuits he seems to have been utterly indifferent to the sufferings he inflicted on others, and to the risks he himself encountered; and ultimately threw away his life, his army, and the prosperity of his country, in a war undertaken without any object, for he was attacking those who were anxious to be his auxiliaries, and persevered in

*This criticism was published (in the London Review) long before the Revolt of Brussels, in 1830, divided Belgium from Holland.

after success was impossible, merely to postpone the humiliation of a retreat.

"Louis's object was power; and he seems to have enjoyed the rare felicity of being unaffected by vanity. He had both intrepidity and conduct in battle — far more of the latter indeed than his ferocious rival; but no desire to display these qualities led him into war, if his objects could be otherwise obtained. He fought those only whom he could not bribe or deceive. The same indifference to mere opinion entitled him to Commines' praise as 'eminently wise in adversity.' When it was not expedient to resist, he could retreat, concede, and apologize, without more apparent humiliation than the king in chess when he moves out of check. He was rapacious, because wealth is a source of power, and because he had no sympathy with those whom he impoverished; but he did not, like his rival, waste his treasures on himself, or on his favourites — he employed them either in the support of his own real force, or in keeping in his pay the ministers and favourites of other sovereigns, and sometimes the sovereigns themselves. His only personal expense was in providing for the welfare of his soul, which he conciliated with his unscrupulous ambition, by allowing the saints, his intercessors, a portion of his spoils. Our author's picture of his superstition may appear at first sight overcharged, but the imaginary prayer ascribed to him is scarcely a caricature of his real address to Notre Dame de Clery, which we copy in Brantome's antiquated spelling —

"'Ah, ma bonne Dame, ma petite Maistresse, ma grande ame, en qui j'ay eu tousjours mon reconfort. Je te prie de supplier Dieu pour moy, et estre mon advocate envers luy, qu'il me pardonne la mort de mon frere—que j'ay fait empoisonner par se meschant Abbé de S. Jean. Je m'en confesse a toi, comme à ma bonne patronne et maistresse. Mais aussi, qu'eusse-je sceu faire? Il ne me faisoit que troubler mon royaume. Fay moy doncques pardonner, ma bonne Dame; *et je sçay ce que je te donneray.*'

"Sir Walter has made good use of these excellent materials. His Louis and his Charles are perfectly faithful copies, with all the spirit and consistency which even *he* could have given to creations of his own. The narrative, too, is flowing and connected: each

event depends on that which preceded it, without any of the episodes, recapitulations, and sudden changes of scene, which in many of his works weaken the interest, and distract the attention of the reader."

The result of Quentin Durward, as regards the contemporary literature of France, and thence of Italy and the Continent generally, would open a field for ample digression. As concerns Scott himself, the rays of foreign enthusiasm speedily thawed the frost of Constable's unwonted misgivings; the Dialogues on Superstition, if he ever began them, were very soon dropped, and the Novelist resumed his pen. He had not sunk under the short-lived frown — for he wrote to Ballantyne, on first ascertaining that a damp was thrown on his usual manufacture,

> "The mouse who only trusts to one poor hole,
> Can never be a mouse of any soul;"

and, while his publisher yet remained irresolute as to the plan of Dialogues, threw off, with unabated energy, his excellent Essay on Romance, for the Supplement to the Encyclopædia Britannica; and I cannot but consider it as another display of his high self-reliance, that, though he well knew to what influence Quentin owed its ultimate success in the British market, he, the instant he found himself encouraged to take up the trade of story-telling again, sprang back to Scotland — nay, voluntarily encountered new difficulties, by selecting the comparatively

tame and unpicturesque realities of modern manners in his native province.

A conversation, which much interested me at the time, had, I fancy, some share at least in this determination. As he, Laidlaw, and myself, were lounging on our ponies, one fine calm afternoon, along the brow of the Eildon hill where it overhangs Melrose, he mentioned to us gaily the *row*, as he called it, that was going on in Paris about Quentin Durward, and said, "I can't but think that I could make better play still with something German." Laidlaw grumbled at this, and said, like a true Scotchman, "Na, na, sir — take my word for it, you are always best, like Helen MacGregor, when your foot is on your native heath; and I have often thought that if you were to write a novel, and lay the scene *here* in the very year you were writing it, you would exceed yourself." — "Hame's hame," quoth Scott, smiling, "be it ever sae hamely. There's something in what you say, Willie. What suppose I were to take Captain Clutterbuck for a hero, and never let the story step a yard beyond the village below us yonder?" — "The very thing I want," says Laidlaw; "stick to Melrose in July 1823." — "Well, upon my word," he answered, "the field would be quite wide enough — and *what for no?*" — (This pet phrase of Meg Dods was a *Laidlawism.*) — Some fun followed about the different real persons in the village that might be introduced with comical effect; but as Laidlaw

and I talked and laughed over our worthy neighbours, his air became graver and graver; and he at length said, " Ay, ay, if one could look into the heart of that little cluster of cottages, no fear but you would find materials enow for tragedy as well as comedy. I undertake to say there is some real romance at this moment going on down there, that, if it could have justice done to it, would be well worth all the fiction that was ever spun out of human brains." He then told us a tale of dark domestic guilt which had recently come under his notice as Sheriff, and of which the scene was not Melrose, but a smaller hamlet on the other side of the Tweed, full in our view; but the details were not of a kind to be dwelt upon; — anything more dreadful was never conceived by Crabbe, and he told it so as to produce on us who listened all the effect of another *Hall of Justice.* It could never have entered into his head to elaborate such a tale; but both Laidlaw and I used to think that this talk suggested St Ronan's Well — though my good friend was by no means disposed to accept that as payment in full of his demand, and from time to time afterwards would give the Sheriff a little poking about " Melrose in July."

Before Sir Walter settled to the new novel, he received Joanna Baillie's long-promised Collection of Poetical Miscellanies, in which appeared his own dramatic sketch of Macduff s Cross. When Halidon

Hill first came forth, there were not wanting reviewers who hailed it in a style of rapture, such as might have been expected had it been a Macbeth. But this folly soon sunk; and I only mention it as an instance of the extent to which reputation bewilders and confounds even persons who have good brains enough when they find it convenient to exercise them. The second attempt of the class produced no sensation whatever at the time; and both would have been long since forgotten, but that they came from Scott's pen. They both contain some fine passages — Halidon Hill has, indeed, several grand ones. But, on the whole, they always seemed to me most egregiously unworthy of Sir Walter; and, now that we have before us his admirable letters on dramatic composition to Allan Cunningham, it appears doubly hard to account for the rashness with which he committed himself in even such slender attempts on a species of composition, of which, in his cool hour, he so fully appreciated the difficult demands. Nevertheless, I am very far from agreeing with those critics who have gravely talked of Halidon Hill and Macduff's Cross, and the still more unfortunate Doom of Devorgoil, as proving that Sir Walter could not have succeeded in the drama, either serious or comic. It would be as fair to conclude, from the abortive fragment of the Vampyre, that Lord Byron could not have written a good novel or romance in prose. Scott threw off these things *currente calamo*;

he never gave himself time to consider beforehand what could be made of their materials, nor bestowed a moment on correcting them after he had covered the allotted quantity of paper with blank verse; and neither when they were new, nor ever after, did he seem to attach the slightest importance to them.

Miss Baillie's volume contained several poems by Mrs Hemans,—some *jeux d'esprit* by the late Miss Catherine Fanshawe, a woman of rare wit and genius, in whose society Scott greatly delighted,—and, *inter alia*, Mr William Howison's early ballad of Polydore, which had been originally published, under Scott's auspices, in the Edinburgh Annual Register for 1810.

"*To Miss Joanna Baillie, Hampstead.*

"Edinburgh, July 11, 1823.

"Your kind letter, my dear friend, heaps coals of fire on my head, for I should have written to you, in common gratitude, long since; but I waited till I should read through the Miscellany with some attention, which as I have not yet done, I can scarce say much to the purpose, so far as that is concerned. My own production sate in the porch like an evil thing, and scared me from proceeding farther than to hurry through your compositions, with which I was delighted, and two or three others. In my own case, I have almost a nervous reluctance to look back on

any recent poetical performance of my own. I may almost say with Macbeth,—

> "I am afraid to think what I have done;
> Look on't again I dare not."

But the best of the matter is, that your purpose has been so satisfactorily answered—and great reason have you to be proud of your influence with the poem-buyers as well as the poem-makers. By the by, you know your request first set me a hammering on an old tale of the Swintons, from whom, by the mother's side, I am descended, and the tinkering work I made of it warmed the heart of a cousin* in the East Indies, a descendant of the renowned Sir Allan, who has sent his kindred poet by this fleet—not a butt of sack, but a pipe of most particular Madeira. You and Mrs Agnes shall have a glass of it when you come to Abbotsford, for I always consider your last only a payment to account—you did not stay half the time you promised. I am going out there on Friday, and shall see all my family re-united around me for the first time these many years. They make a very good figure as 'honest men and bonny lasses.' I read Miss Fanshawe's pieces, which are quite beautiful. Mrs Hemans is somewhat too poetical for my taste—too many flowers I mean, and too little fruit—but that may be the cynical criticism of

* George Swinton, Esq. (now of Swinton), was at this time Secretary to the Council in Bengal.

an elderly gentleman; for it is certain that when I was young, I read verses of every kind with infinitely more indulgence, because with more pleasure than I can now do—the more shame for me now to refuse the complaisance which I have had so often to solicit. I am hastening to think prose a better thing than verse, and if you have any hopes to convince me to the contrary, it must be by writing and publishing another volume of plays as fast as possible. I think they would be most favourably received; and beg, like Burns, to

> ——"tell you of mine and Scotland's drouth,
> Your servant's humble ——"

A young friend of mine, Lord Francis Gower, has made a very fair attempt to translate Goëthe's untranslatable play of Faust, or Faustus. He has given also a version of Schiller's very fine poem on Casting the Bell, which I think equals Mr Sotheby's—nay, privately (for tell it not in Epping Forest, whisper it not in Hampstead), rather outdoes our excellent friend. I have not compared them minutely, however. As for Mr Howison, such is the worldly name of Polydore, I never saw such a change in my life upon a young man. It may be fourteen years, or thereabouts, since he introduced himself to me, by sending me some most excellent verses for a youth of sixteen years old. I asked him to Ashestiel, and he came—a thin hectic youth, with an eye of dark

fire, a cheek that coloured on the slightest emotion, and a mind fraught with feeling of the tender and the beautiful, and eager for poetical fame—otherwise, of so little acquaintance with the world and the world's ways, that a sucking-turkey might have been his tutor. I was rather a bear-like nurse for such a lamb-like charge. We could hardly indeed associate together, for I was then eternally restless, and he as sedentary. He could neither fish, shoot or course—he could not bear the inside of a carriage with the ladies, for it made him sick, nor the outside with my boys, for it made him giddy. He could not walk, for it fatigued him, nor ride, for he fell off. I did all I could to make him happy, and it was not till he had caught two colds and one sprain, besides risking his life in the Tweed, that I gave up all attempts to convert him to the things of this world. Our acquaintance after this languished, and at last fell asleep, till one day last year I met at Lockhart's a thin consumptive-looking man, bent double with study, and whose eyes seemed to have been extinguished almost by poring over the midnight lamp, though protected by immense green spectacles. I then found that my poet had turned metaphysician, and that these spectacles were to assist him in gazing into the millstone of moral philosophy. He looked at least twice as old as he really is, and has since published a book, very small in size, but, from its extreme abstracted doctrines, more difficult to comprehend than any I ever

opened in my life.* I will take care he has one of my copies of the Miscellany. If he gets into the right line, he will do something remarkable yet.

"We saw, you will readily suppose, a great deal of Miss Edgeworth, and two very nice girls, her younger sisters. It is scarcely possible to say more of this very remarkable person, than that she not only completely answered, but exceeded the expectations which I had formed. I am particularly pleased with the *naïveté* and good-humoured ardour of mind which she unites with such formidable powers of acute observation. In external appearance, she is quite the fairy of our nursery-tale, the Whippity Stourie, if you remember such a sprite, who came flying through the window to work all sorts of marvels. I will never believe but what she has a wand in her pocket, and pulls it out to conjure a little before she begins to those very striking pictures of manners. I am grieved to say, that, since they left Edinburgh on a tour to the Highlands, they have been detained at Forres by an erysipelas breaking out on Miss Edgeworth's face. They have been twelve days there, and are now returning southwards, as a letter from Harriet informs me. I hope soon to have them at Abbotsford, where we will take good care of them,

* "An Essay on the Sentiments of Attraction, Adaptation, and Variety. To which are added, A Key to the Mythology of the Ancients; and Europe's Likeness to the Human Spirit. By William Howison." Edinburgh: 1822.

and the invalid in particular. What would I give to have you and Mrs Agnes to meet them, and what canty cracks we would set up about the days of langsyne! The increasing powers of steam, which, like you, I look on half-proud, half-sad, half-angry, and half-pleased, in doing so much for the commercial world, promise something also for the sociable; and, like Prince Houssein's tapestry, will, I think, one day waft friends together in the course of a few hours, and, for aught we may be able to tell, bring Hampstead and Abbotsford within the distance of,—'Will you dine with us quietly to-morrow?' I wish I could advance this happy abridgment of time and space, so as to make it serve my present wishes.

"Abbotsford, July 18, ——

"I have for the first time these several years, my whole family united around me, excepting Lockhart, who is with his yeomanry, but joins us to-morrow. Walter is returned a fine steady soldier-like young man, from his abode on the Continent, and little Charles, with his friend Surtees, has come from Wales, so that we draw together from distant quarters. When you add Sophia's baby, I assure you my wife and I look very patriarchal. The misfortune is, all this must be soon over, for Walter is admitted one of the higher class of students in the Military College, and must join against the 1st of August. I have some chance, I think, when he has

had a year's study, of getting him upon the staff in the Ionian islands, which I should greatly prefer to his lounging about villages in horse-quarters; he has a strong mathematical turn, which promises to be of service in his profession. Little Charles is getting steadily on with his learning; but to what use he is to turn it, I scarce know yet.—I am very sorry indeed that the Doctor is complaining. He whose life has been one course of administering help and comfort to others, should not, one would think, suffer himself; but such are the terms on which we hold our gifts — however valuable to others, they are sometimes less available to ourselves. I sincerely hope this will find him better, and Mrs Baillie easier in proportion. When I was subject a little to sore throats, I cured myself of that tendency by spunging my throat, breast, and shoulders, every morning with the coldest water I could get; but this is rather a horse remedy, though I still keep up the practice. All here — that is, wives, maidens, and bachelors bluff, not forgetting little John Hugh, or, as he is popularly styled, Hugh Littlejohn — send loving remembrances to you and Mrs Agnes.—Ever, dear Mrs Joanna, most truly yours, WALTER SCOTT.'

The next month — August 1823 — was one of the happiest in Scott's Life. Never did I see a brighter day at Abbotsford than that on which Miss Edgeworth first arrived there — never can I forget

her look and accent when she was received by him at his archway, and exclaimed, "Everything about you is exactly what one ought to have had wit enough to dream!" The weather was beautiful, and the edifice, and its appurtenances, were all but complete; and day after day, so long as she could remain, her host had always some new plan of gaiety. One day there was fishing on the Cauldshields Loch, and a dinner on the heathy bank. Another, the whole party feasted by Thomas the Rhymer's waterfall in the glen — and the stone on which Maria that day sat was ever afterwards called *Edgeworth's stone.* A third day we had to go further a-field. He must needs show her, not Newark only, but all the upper scenery of the Yarrow, where "fair hangs the apple frae the rock," — and the baskets were unpacked about sunset, beside the ruined Chapel overlooking St Mary's Loch — and he had scrambled to gather *bluebells* and heath-flowers, with which all the young ladies must twine their hair, — and they sang, and he recited, until it was time to go home beneath the softest of harvest moons. Thus a fortnight was passed — and the vision closed; for Miss Edgeworth never saw Abbotsford again during his life; and I am very sure she could never bear to look upon it now that the spirit is fled.

Another honoured and welcome guest of the same month was Mr J. L. Adolphus — the author of the Letters to Heber; and I am enabled to enrich these

pages with some reminiscences of that visit — the first of several he paid to Abbotsford — which this gentleman has been so kind as to set down for my use, and I am sure for the gratification of all my readers. After modestly recounting the circumstances which led to his invitation to Abbotsford, my friendly contributor says: —

"With great pleasure and curiosity, but with something like awe, I first saw this celebrated house emerge from below the plantation which screened it from the Selkirk and Melrose road. Antique as it was in design, it had not yet had time to take any tint from the weather, and its whole complication of towers, turrets, galleries, cornices, and quaintly ornamented mouldings, looked fresh from the chisel, except where the walls were enriched with some really ancient carving or inscription. As I approached the house, there was a busy sound of mason's tools; the shrubbery before the windows was strewed with the works of the carpenter and stone-cutter, and with grotesque antiquities, for which a place was yet to be found; on one side were the beginnings of a fruit and flower garden; on another, but more distant, a slope bristling with young firs and larches; near the door murmured an unfinished fountain.

"I had seen Sir Walter Scott, but never met him in society, before this visit. He received me with all his well-known cordiality and simplicity of manner. The circumstances under which I presented

myself were peculiar, as the only cause of my being under his roof was one which could not without awkwardness be alluded to, while a strict reserve existed on the subject of the Waverley novels. This, however, did not create any embarrassment; and he entered into conversation as if anything that might have been said with reference to the origin of our acquaintance had been said an hour before. I have since been present at his first reception of many visitors; and upon such occasions, as indeed upon every other, I never saw a man who, in his intercourse with all persons, was so perfect a master of courtesy. His manners were so plain and natural, and his kindness took such immediate possession of the feelings, that this excellence in him might for a while pass almost unobserved. I cannot pay a higher testimony to it than by owning that I first fully appreciated it from his behaviour to others. His air and aspect, at the moment of a first introduction, were placid, modest, and, for his time of life, venerable. Occasionally, where he stood a little on ceremony, he threw into his address a deferential tone, which had in it something of old-fashioned politeness, and became him extremely well.

"A point of hospitality in which Sir Walter Scott never failed, whatever might be the pretensions of the guest, was to do the honours of conversation. When a stranger arrived, he seemed to consider it as much a duty to offer him the resources of his

mind as those of his table; taking care, however, by his choice of subjects, to give the visiter an opportunity of making his own stores, if he had them, available. I have frequently observed this — with admiration both of his powers and of his discriminating kindness. To me, at the time of my first visit, he addressed himself often as to a member of his own profession; and indeed he seemed always to have a real pleasure in citing from his own experience as an advocate and a law officer. The first book he recommended to me for an hour's occupation in his library, was an old Scotch pamphlet of the trial of Philip Stanfield (published also in the English State Trials;) a dismal and mysterious story of murder, connected slightly with the politics of the time of James II., and having in it a taste of the marvellous.*

"It would, I think, be extremely difficult to give a just idea of his general conversation to any one who had not known him. Considering his great personal and literary popularity, and the wide circle of society in which he had lived, it is perhaps remarkable that so few of his sayings, real or imputed, are in circulation. But he did not affect sayings:

* See the case of Philip Stanfield's alleged parricide, and Sir Walter Scott's remarks thereupon, in his edition of "Lord Fountainhall's Chronological Notes on Scottish Affairs," pp. 233–36; and compare an extract from one of his early note-books, given *ante*, Vol. I. p. 359.

the points and sententious turns, which are so easily caught up and transmitted, were not natural to him: though he occasionally expressed a thought very pithily and neatly. For example, he once described the Duke of Wellington's style of debating as 'slicing the argument into two or three parts, and helping himself to the best.' But the great charm of his 'table-talk' was in the sweetness and *abandon* with which it flowed, — always, however, guided by good sense and taste; the warm and unstudied eloquence with which he expressed rather sentiments than opinions; and the liveliness and force with which he narrated and described: and all that he spoke derived so much of its effect from indefinable felicities of manner, look, and tone — and sometimes from the choice of apparently insignificant words — that a moderately faithful transcript of his sentences would be but a faint image of his conversation.

"At the time of my first and second visits to Abbotsford, in 1823 and 1824, his health was less broken, and his spirits more youthful and buoyant, than when I afterwards saw him, in the years from 1827 to 1831. Not only was he inexhaustible in anecdote, but he still loved to exert the talent of dramatizing, and in some measure representing in his own person the incidents he told of, or the situations he imagined. I recollect, for instance, his sketching in this manner (it was, I think, *apropos* to some zoological discussion with Mr William

Stewart Rose) a sailor trying to persuade a monkey to speak, and vowing, with all kinds of whimsical oaths, that he would not tell of him.* On the evening of my first arrival, he took me to see his 'wild man,' as he called him, the celebrated Tom Purdie, who was in an outhouse, unpacking some Indian idols, weapons, and carved work, just arrived from England. The better to exhibit Tom, his master played a most amusing scene of wonder, impatience, curiosity, and fear, lest anything should be broken or the candle fall into the loose hay of the packages, but all this with great submission to the better judgment of the factotum, who went on gravely breaking up and unpapering after his own manner, as if he had been sorting some toys for a restless child. Another specimen of his talent for representation which struck me forcibly, about the same time, was his telling the story (related in his Letters on Demonology) of a dying man who, in a state of delirium, while his nurse was absent, left his room, appeared at a club of which he was president, and was taken for his own ghost. In relating this not very likely story, he described with his deep and lingering tones, and with gestures and looks suited to each part of the action, the sick man, deadly pale, and with vacant eyes, walking into the club-room; the silence and consternation of the club; the supposed spectre moving to the head of the table;

* Mr Rose was at this time meditating his entertaining little *jeu d'esprit*, entitled "Anecdotes of Monkeys."

giving a ghastly salutation to the company; raising a glass towards his lips; stiffly turning his head from side to side, as if pledging the several members; his departure just at midnight; and the breathless conference of the club, as they recovered themselves from this strange visit. St Ronan's Well was published soon after the telling of this story, and I have no doubt that Sir Walter had it in his mind in writing one of the last scenes of that novel.

"He read a play admirably well, distinguishing the speeches by change of tone and manner, without naming the characters. I had the pleasure of hearing him recite, shortly before it was published, his own spirited ballad of 'Bonny Dundee;' and never did I listen to more 'eloquent music.' This was in one of the last years of his life, but the lines

> 'Away, to the hills, to the caves, to the rocks!
> Ere I own a usurper, I'll couch with the fox!'

could not, in his most vigorous days, have been intonated with more fire and energy.

"In conversation he sometimes added very strikingly to the ludicrous or pathetic effect of an expression by dwelling on a syllable; *holding the note*, as it would have been called in music. Thus I recollect his telling, with an extremely droll emphasis, that once, when a boy, he was '*cuffed*' by his aunt for singing,

'There's nae repentance in my heart,
The fiddle's in my arms!'*

"No one who has seen him can forget the surprising power of change which his countenance showed when awakened from a state of composure. In 1823, when I first knew him, the hair upon his forehead was quite grey, but his face, which was healthy and sanguine, and the hair about it, which had still a strong reddish tinge, contrasted rather than harmonized with the sleek, silvery locks above; a contrast which might seem rather suited to a jovial and humorous, than to a pathetic expression. But his features were equally capable of both. The form and hue of his eyes (for the benefit of minute physiognomists it should be noted that the iris contained some small specks of brown) were wonderfully calculated for showing great varieties of emotion. Their mournful aspect was extremely earnest and affecting; and, when he told some dismal and mysterious story, they had a doubtful, melancholy, exploring look, which appealed irresistibly to the hearer's imagination. Occasionally, when he spoke of something very audacious or eccentric, they would dilate and light up with a tragic-comic, harebrained expression, quite peculiar to himself; one might see in it a whole

* These lines are from the old ballad, "Macpherson's Lament,"—the ground-work of Burns's glorious "Macpherson's Farewell."—See Scott's *Miscellaneous Prose Works*, vol. xvii. p. 259

chapter of *Cœur-de-lion* and the Clerk of Copmanhurst. Never, perhaps, did a man go through all the gradations of laughter with such complete enjoyment, and a countenance so radiant. The first dawn of a humorous thought would show itself sometimes, as he sat silent, by an involuntary lengthening of the upper lip, followed by a shy sidelong glance at his neighbours, indescribably whimsical, and seeming to ask from their looks whether the spark of drollery should be suppressed or allowed to blaze out. In the full tide of mirth he did indeed 'laugh the heart's laugh,' like Walpole, but it was not boisterous and overpowering, nor did it check the course of his words; he could go on telling or descanting, while his lungs did 'crow like chanticleer,' his syllables, in the struggle, growing more emphatic, his accent more strongly Scotch, and his voice plaintive with excess of merriment.

"The habits of life at Abbotsford, when I first saw it, ran in the same easy, rational, and pleasant course which I believe they always afterwards took; though the family was at this time rather straitened in its arrangements, as some of the principal rooms were not finished. After breakfast Sir Walter took his short interval of study in the light and elegant little room afterwards called Miss Scott's. That which he occupied when Abbotsford was complete, though more convenient in some material respects

seemed to me the least cheerful* and least private in the house. It had, however, a recommendation which perhaps he was very sensible of, that as he sat at his writing-table, he could look out at his young trees. About one o'clock he walked or rode, generally with some of his visiters. At this period, he used to be a good deal on horseback, and a pleasant sight it was to see the gallant old gentleman, in his seal-skin cap and short green jacket, lounging along a field-side on his mare, Sibyl Grey, and pausing now and then to talk, with a serio-comic look, to a labouring man or woman, and rejoice them with some quaint saying in broad Scotch. The dinner hour was early; the sitting after dinner was hospitably but not immoderately prolonged; and the whole family party (for such it always seemed, even if there were several visiters) then met again for a short evening, which was passed in conversation and music. I once heard Sir Walter say, that he believed there was a 'pair' of cards (such was his antiquated expression) somewhere in the house—but probably there is no tradition of their having ever been used. The drawing-room and library (unfurnished at the time of my first visit) opened into each other, and formed a beautiful evening apartment. By every one who has visited at Abbotsford they must be associated with some of the most delightful recollec-

* It is, however the only sitting-room in the house that looks *southward*.

tions of his life. Sir Walter listened to the music of his daughters, which was all congenial to his own taste, with a never-failing enthusiasm. He followed the fine old songs which Mrs Lockhart sang to her harp with his mind, eyes, and lips, almost as if joining in an act of religion. To other musical performances he was a dutiful, and often a pleased listener, but I believe he cared little for mere music; the notes failed to charm him if they were not connected with good words, or immediately associated with some history or strong sentiment, upon which his imagination could fasten. A similar observation might, I should conceive, apply to his feeling of other arts. I do not remember any picture or print at Abbotsford which was remarkable merely as a work of colour or design. All, I think, either represented historical, romantic, or poetical subjects, or related to persons, places, or circumstances in which he took an interest. Even in architecture, his taste had the same bias; almost every stone of his house bore an allusion or suggested a sentiment.

"It seemed at first a little strange, in a scene where so many things brought to mind the Waverley novels, to hear no direct mention of them, or even allusion to their existence. But as forbearance on this head was a rule on which a complete tacit understanding subsisted, there was no embarrassment or appearance of mystery on the subject. Once or twice I have heard a casual reference made, in Sir

Walter's presence, to some topic in the novels; no surprise or appearance of displeasure followed, but the conversation, so far as it tended that way, died a natural death. It has, I believe, happened that he himself has been caught unawares on the forbidden ground; I have heard it told by a very acute observer, not now living, that on his coming once to Abbotsford, after the publication of the Pirate, Sir Walter asked him, 'Well, and how is our friend Kemble? glorious John!' and then, recollecting, of course, that he was talking Claude Halcro, he checked himself, and could not for some moments recover from the false step. Had a man been ever so prone to indiscretion on such subjects, it would have been unpardonable to betray it towards Sir Walter Scott, who (beside all his other claims to respect and affection) was himself cautious, even to nicety, of hazarding an enquiry or remark which might appear to be an intrusion upon the affairs of those with whom he conversed. It may be observed, too, that the publications of the day were by no means the staple of conversation at Abbotsford, though they had their turn; and with respect to his own works, Sir Walter did not often talk even of those which were avowed. If he ever indulged in anything like egotism, he loved better to speak of what he had done and seen than of what he had written.

"After all, there is perhaps hardly a secret in the world which has not its safety-valve. Though Sir

Walter abstained strictly from any mention of the Waverley novels, he did not scruple to talk, and that with great zest, of the plays which had been founded upon some of them, and the characters, as there represented. Soon after our first meeting, he described to me, with his usual dramatic power, the deathbed scene of 'the original Dandie Dinmont;'* of course referring, ostensibly at least, to the *opera* of Guy Mannering. He dwelt with extreme delight upon Mackay's performances of the Bailie and Dominie Sampson, and appeared to taste them with all the fresh and disinterested enjoyment of a common spectator. I do not know a more interesting circumstance in the history of the Waverley novels, than the pleasure which their illustrious author thus received, as it were at the rebound, from those creations of his own mind which had so largely increased the enjoyments of all the civilized world.

"In one instance only did he, in my presence, say or do anything which seemed to have an intentional reference to the novels themselves, while they were yet unacknowledged. On the last day of my visit in 1823, I rode out with Sir Walter and his friend Mr Rose, who was then his guest and frequent companion in these short rambles. Sir Walter led us a little way down the left bank of the Tweed, and then into the moors by a track called the Girth Road,

* See Note to Guy Mannering, *Waverley Novels*, vol. iii. p. 242.

along which, he told us, the pilgrims from that side of the river used to come to Melrose. We traced upward, at a distance, the course of the little stream called the Elland—Sir Walter, as his habit was, pausing now and then to point out anything in the prospect that was either remarkable in itself, or associated with any interesting recollection. I remember, in particular, his showing us, on a distant eminence, a dreary lone house, called the Hawk's Nest, in which a young man, returning from a fair with money, had been murdered in the night, and buried under the floor, where his remains were found after the death or departure of the inmates; the fact was simple enough in itself, but related in his manner, it was just such a story as should have been told by a poet on a lonely heath. When we had ridden a little time on the moors, he said to me rather pointedly, 'I am going to show you something that I think will interest you;' and presently, in a wild corner of the hills, he halted us at a place where stood three small ancient towers or castellated houses, in ruins, at short distances from each other. It was plain, upon the slightest consideration of the topography, that one (perhaps any one) of these was the tower of Glendearg, where so many romantic and marvellous adventures happen in The Monastery. While we looked at this forlorn group, I said to Sir Walter that they were what Burns called 'ghaist-alluring edifices.' 'Yes,' he answered carelessly, 'I

daresay there are many stories about them.' As we returned, by a different route, he made me dismount and take a footpath through a part of Lord Somerville's grounds, where the Elland runs through a beautiful little valley, the stream winding between level borders of the brightest greensward, which narrow or widen as the steep sides of the glen advance or recede. The place is called the Fairy Dean, and it required no cicerone to tell that the glen was that in which Father Eustace, in The Monastery, is intercepted by the White Lady of Avenel."

Every friend of Sir Walter's must admire particularly Mr Adolphus's exquisite description of his laugh; but indeed, every word of these memoranda is precious, and I shall by and by give the rest of them under the proper date.

In September, the Highland Society of Scotland, at the request of the late Sir Henry Stewart of Allanton, sent a deputation to his seat in Lanarkshire, to examine and report upon his famous improvements in the art of transplanting trees. Sir Walter was one of the committee appointed for this business, and he took a lively interest in it; as witness the Essay on Landscape Gardening,* which, whatever may be the fate of Sir Henry Stewart's own writings, will transmit his name to posterity.

* *Miscellaneous Prose Works*, vol xxi. pp. 77–151.

Scott made several Allantonian experiments at Abbotsford; but found reason in the sequel to abate somewhat of the enthusiasm which his Essay expresses as to *the system*. The question, after all, comes to pounds, shillings, and pence—and, whether Sir Henry's accounts had or had not been accurately kept, the thing turned out greatly more expensive on Tweedside than he had found it represented in Clydesdale.

I accompanied Sir Walter on this little expedition, in the course of which we paid several other visits, and explored not a few ancient castles in the upper regions of the Tweed and the Clyde. Even while the weather was most unpropitious, nothing could induce him to remain in the carriage when we approached any ruined or celebrated edifice. If he had never seen it before, his curiosity was like that of an eager stripling;—if he had examined it fifty times, he must renew his familiarity, and gratify the tenderness of youthful reminiscences. While on the road, his conversation never flagged — story suggested story, and ballad came upon ballad in endless succession. But what struck me most, was the apparently omnivorous grasp of his memory. That he should recollect every stanza of any ancient ditty of chivalry or romance, that had once excited his imagination, could no longer surprise me: but it seemed as if he remembered everything without exception, so it were in anything like the shape of verse, that he had ever

read. For example, the morning after we left Allanton, we went across the country to breakfast with his friend Cranstoun (Lord Corehouse), who accompanied us in the same carriage; and his Lordship happening to repeat a phrase, remarkable only for its absurdity, from a Magazine poem of the very silliest feebleness, which they had laughed at when at College together, Scott immediately began at the beginning, and gave it us to the end, with apparently no more effort than if he himself had composed it the day before. I could after this easily believe a story often told by Hogg, to the effect that, lamenting in Scott's presence his having lost his only copy of a long ballad composed by him in his early days, and of which he then could recall merely the subject, and one or two fragments, Sir Walter forthwith said, with a smile, "Take your pencil, Jemmy, and I'll dictate your ballad to you, word for word;"—which was done accordingly.*

* "One morning at breakfast, in my father's house, shortly after one of Sir Walter's severe illnesses, he was asked to partake of some of 'the baked meats that coldly did furnish forth the *breakfast* table.'—'No, no,' he answered; 'I bear in mind at present Bob, the advice of your old friend Dr Weir—

> "From season'd meats avert your eyes,
> From hams, and tongues, and pigeon pies—
> A venison pasty set before ye,
> Each bit you eat—*Memento mori*."

This was a verse of a clever rhyming prescription our cousin, Dr Weir of Eastbank, had sent some 30 years before, and which my father then remembered to have repeated to Sir Walter upon one

As this was among the first times that I ever travelled for a few days in company with Scott, I may as well add the surprise with which his literary diligence, when away from home and his books, could not fail to be observed. Wherever we slept, whether in a noble mansion or in the shabbiest of country inns, and whether the work was done after retiring at night or before an early start in the morning, he *very rarely* mounted the carriage again without having a packet of the well-known aspect ready sealed, and corded, and addressed to his printer in Edinburgh. I used to suspect that he had adopted in his latter years the plan of writing everything on paper of the quarto form, in place of the folio which he at an earlier period used, chiefly because in this way, whatever he was writing, and wherever he wrote, he might seem to casual observers to be merely engaged upon a common letter; and the rapidity of his execution, taken with the shape of his sheet, has probably deceived hundreds; but when he had finished his two or three letters, St Ronan's Well, or whatever was in hand, had made a chapter in advance.

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of their Liddesdale raids. The verses had almost entirely escaped his memory, but Sir Walter was able to give us a long *screed* of them. Some surprise was expressed at the tenaciousness of his memory; and to a remark of my mother, that he seemed to know something of the words of every song that ever was sung, he replied, 'I daresay it wad be gey ill to kittle me in a Scots ane, at ony rate.'"—*Note by Mr Andrew Shortrede.*—[1839.]

The following was his first letter to Miss Edgeworth after her return to Ireland. Her youngest sister Sophia — (a beautiful creature — now gone, like most of the pleasant party then assembled) — had particularly pleased him by her singing of a fragment of an Irish ditty, the heroine of which was a sad damsel in a *petticoat of red* — the chorus, I think, something like

> "*Shool — shool! ochone — ochone!*
> Thinking on the days that are long enough agone;"

and he had, as we shall see, been busying himself among his ballad collections, to see if he could recover any more of the words than the young lady had given him.

"*To Miss Edgeworth, Edgeworthstown.*

"Abbotsford, 22d Sept. 1823.

"My Dear Miss Edgeworth,

"Miss Harriet had the goodness to give me an account of your safe arrival in the Green Isle, of which I was, sooth to say, extremely glad; for I had my own private apprehensions that your very disagreeable disorder might return while you were among strangers, and in our rugged climate. I now conclude you are settled quietly at home, and looking back on recollections of mountains, and valleys, and pipes, and clans, and cousins, and masons, and

carpenters, and puppy-dogs, and all the confusion of Abbotsford, as one does on the recollections of a dream. We shall not easily forget the vision of having seen you and our two young friends, and your kind indulgence for all our humours, sober and fantastic, rough or smooth. Mamma writes to make her own acknowledgments for your very kind attention about the cobweb stockings, which reached us under the omnipotent frank of Croker, who, like a true Irish heart, never scruples stretching his powers a little to serve a friend.

"We are all here much as you left us, only in possession of our drawing-room, and glorious with our gas-lights, which as yet have only involved us once in total darkness—once in a temporary eclipse. In both cases the remedy was easy, and the cause obvious; and if the gas has no greater objections than I have yet seen or can anticipate, it is soon like to put wax and mutton-suet entirely out of fashion. I have recovered, by great accident, another verse or two of Miss Sophia's beautiful Irish air; it is only curious as hinting at the cause of the poor damsel of the red petticoat's deep dolour:—

'I went to the mill, but the miller was gone;
I sate me down and cried ochone,
To think on the days that are past and gone,
Of Dickie Macphalion that's slain.
Shool, shool, &c.

'I sold my rock, I sold my reel,
And sae hae I my spinning-wheel,
And all to buy a cap of steel,
For Dickie Macphalion that's slain.
Shool, shool,' &c. &c.

"But who was Dickie Macphalion for whom this lament was composed? Who was the Pharaoh for whom the Pyramid was raised? The questions are equally dubious and equally important, but as the one, we may reasonably suppose, was a King of Egypt, so I think we may guess the other to have been a Captain of Rapparees, since the ladies, God bless them, honour with the deepest of their lamentation gallants who live wildly, die bravely, and scorn to survive until they become old and not worth weeping for. So much for Dickie Macphalion, who, I dare say, was in his day 'a proper young man.'*

"We have had Sir Humphrey Davy here for a day or two—very pleasant and instructive, and Will Rose for a month — that is, coming and go-

* "As clever Tom Clinch, while the rabble was bawling,
Rode stately through Holborn to die in his calling,
He stopt at the George for a bottle of sack,
And promised to pay for it when he came back.
His waistcoat, and stockings, and breeches were white,
His cap had a new cherry ribbon to tie't.
The maids to the doors and the balconies ran,
And said, 'Lack-a-day! he's a proper young man!'"
SWIFT.

ing.—Lockhart has been pleading at the circuit for a clansman of mine, who, having sustained an affront from two men on the road home from Earlstown fair, nobly waylaid and murdered them both single-handed. He also cut off their noses, which was carrying the matter rather too far, and so the jury thought—so my namesake must strap for it, as many of *The Rough Clan* have done before him. After this Lockhart and I went to Sir Henry Stewart's, to examine his process of transplanting trees. He exercises wonderful power, certainly, over the vegetable world, and has made his trees dance about as merrily as ever did Orpheus; but he has put me out of conceit with my profession of a landscape-gardener, now I see so few brains are necessary for a stock in trade. I wish Miss Harriet would dream no more ominous visions about Spicie.* The poor thing has been very ill of that fatal disorder proper to the canine race, called, *par excellence, the Distemper*. I have prescribed for her, as who should say thus you would doctor a dog, and I hope to bring her through, as she is a very affectionate little creature, and of a fine race. She has still an odd wheezing, however, which makes me rather doubtful of success.

* *Spice*, one of the Pepper and Mustard terriers. Scott varied the names, unlike his Dandie Dinmont, but still, as he phrased it, "stuck to the cruets." At one time he had a *Pepper*, a *Mustard*, a *Spice*, a *Ginger*, a *Catchup*, and a *Soy* — all descendants of the real Charlie's-hope patriarchs.

The Lockharts are both well, and at present our lodgers, together with John Hugh, or, as he calls himself, Donichue, which sounds like one of your old Irish kings. They all join in everything kind and affectionate to you and the young ladies, and best compliments to your brother. — Believe me ever, dear Miss Edgeworth, yours, with the greatest truth and respect, WALTER SCOTT."

The following letter was addressed to Joanna Baillie on the death of her brother, the celebrated physician:—

"*To Miss Joanna Baillie.*

"Abbotsford, 3d October 1823.

"My Dearest Friend,

"Your very kind letter reached me just while I was deliberating how to address you on the painful, most painful subject, to which it refers, and considering how I could best intrude my own sympathy amidst your domestic affliction. The token you have given of your friendship, by thinking of me at such a moment, I will always regard as a most precious, though melancholy proof of its sincerity. We have, indeed, to mourn such a man, as, since medicine was first esteemed an useful and honoured science, has rarely occurred to grace its annals, and who will be lamented so long as any one lives, who has experi-

enced the advantage of his professional skill, and the affectionate kindness by which it was accompanied. My neighbour and kinsman, John Scott of Gala, who was attended by our excellent friend during a very dangerous illness, is mingling his sorrow with mine, as one who laments almost a second father; and when in this remote corner there are two who join in such a sincere tribute to his memory, what must be the sorrows within his more immediate sphere of exertion! I do, indeed, sincerely pity the family and friends who have lost such a head, and that at the very time when they might, in the course of nature, have looked to enjoy his society for many years, and even more closely and intimately than during the preceding period of his life, when his domestic intercourse was so much broken in upon by his professional duties. It is not for us, in this limited state of observation and comprehension, to enquire why the lives most useful to society, and most dear to friendship, seem to be of a shorter date than those which are useless, or perhaps worse than useless;— but the certainty that in another and succeeding state of things these apparent difficulties will be balanced and explained, is the best, if not the only cure for unavailing sorrow, and this your well-balanced and powerful mind knows better how to apply, than I how to teach the doctrine.

"We were made in some degree aware of the extremely precarious state of our late dear friend's

health, by letters which young Surtees had from his friends in Gloucestershire, during a residence of a few weeks with us, and which mentioned the melancholy subject in a very hopeless manner, and with all the interest which it was calculated to excite. Poor dear Mrs Baillie is infinitely to be pitied, but you are a family of love; and though one breach has been made among you, will only extend your arms towards each other the more, to hide, though you cannot fill up the gap which has taken place. The same consolation remains for Mrs Agnes and yourself, my dear friend; and I have no doubt, that in the affection of Dr Baillie's family, and their success in life, you will find those pleasing ties which connect the passing generation with that which is rising to succeed it upon the stage.

"Sophia is in the way of enlarging her family—an event to which I look forward with a mixture of anxiety and hope. One baby, not very strong, though lively and clever, is a frail chance upon which to stake happiness; at the same time, God knows there have been too many instances of late of the original curse having descended on young mothers with fatal emphasis; but we will hope the best. In the meantime her spirits are good, and her health equally so. I know that even at this moment these details will not be disagreeable to you, so strangely are life and death, sorrow and pleasure, blended together in the tapestry of human life.

" I answer your letter before I have seen Sophia; but I know well how deeply she is interested in your grief. My wife and Anne send their kindest and most sympathetic regards. Walter is at the Royal Military College to study the higher branches of his profession, and Charles has returned to Wales.

" My affectionate respects attend Mrs Baillie and Mrs Agnes, and I ever am, my dear friend, respectfully and affectionately, yours,

WALTER SCOTT."

" *To D. Terry, Esq., London.*

" Abbotsford, October 29, 1823.

My Dear Terry,

" Our correspondence has been flagging for some time, yet I have much to thank you for, and perhaps something to apologize for. We did not open Mr Baldock's commode, because, in honest truth, this place has cost me a great deal within these twc years, and I was loth to add a superfluity, however, elegant, to the heavy expense already necessarily incurred. Lady Scott, the party most interested in the drawing-room, thinks mirrors, when they cast up, better things and more necessary. We have received the drawing-room grate — very handsome indeed — from Bower, but not those for the library or my room, nor are they immediately wanted. Nothing have we heard of the best bed and its accom-

paniments, but there is no hurry for this neither. We are in possession of the bed-room story, garrets, and a part of the under or sunk story—basement, the learned call it; but the library advances slowly. The extreme wetness of the season has prevented the floor from being laid, nor dare we now venture it till spring, when shifting and arranging the books will be 'a pleasing pain and toil with a gain.' The front of the house is now enclosed by a court-yard wall, with flankers of 100 feet, and a handsome gateway. The interior of the court is to be occupied by a large gravel drive for carriages, the rest with flowers, shrubs, and a few trees: the inside of the court-yard wall is adorned with large carved medallions from the old Cross of Edinburgh, and Roman or colonial heads in bas relief from the ancient station of Petreia, now called Old Penrith. A walk runs along it, which I intend to cover with creepers as a trellissed arbour:—the court-yard is separated from the garden by a very handsome colonnade, the arches filled up with cast-iron, and the cornice carved with flowers, after the fashion of the running cornice on the cloisters at Melrose: the masons here cut so cheap that it really tempts one. All this is in a great measure finished, and by throwing the garden into a subordinate state, as a sort of *plaisance*, it has totally removed the awkward appearance of its being so near the house. On the contrary, it seems a natural and handsome accompaniment to the old-looking mansion.

Some people of very considerable taste have been here, who have given our doings much applause, particularly Dr Russell, a beautiful draughtsman, and no granter of propositions. The interior of the hall is finished with scutcheons, sixteen of which, running along the centre, I intend to paint with my own quarterings, so far as I know them, for I am as yet uncertain of two on my mother's side; but fourteen are no bad quartering to be quite real, and the others may be covered with a cloud, since I have no ambition to be a canon of Strasburg, for which sixteen are necessary; I may light on these, however. The scutcheons on the cornice I propose to charge with the blazonry of all the Border clans, eighteen in number, and so many of the great families, not clans, as will occupy the others. The windows are to be painted with the different bearings of different families of the clan of Scott, which, with their quarterings and impalings, will make a pretty display. The arranging all these arms, &c., have filled up what Robinson Crusoe calls the rainy season, for such this last may on the whole be called.—I shall be greatly obliged to you to let me know what debts I owe in London, that I may remit accordingly: best to pay for one's piping in time, and before we are familiar with our purchases. You mentioned having some theatrical works for me; do not fail to let me know the amount. Have you seen Dr Meyrick's account

of the Ancient Armour? — it is a book beautifully got up, and of much antiquarian information.*

"Having said so much for my house, I add for my family, that those who are here are quite well, but Lady Scott a little troubled with asthma. Ballantyne will send you my last affair now in progress: it is within, or may be easily compressed into dramatic time; whether it is otherwise qualified for the stage, I cannot guess. — I am, my dear Terry, truly yours, WALTER SCOTT."

The novel to which Sir Walter thus alludes was published about the middle of December, and in its English reception there was another falling off, which of course somewhat dispirited the bookseller for the moment. Scotch readers in general dissented stoutly from this judgment, alleging (as they might well do), that Meg Dods deserved a place by the side of Monkbarns, Bailie Jarvie, and Captain Dalgetty; — that no one, who had lived in the author's own country, could hesitate to recognise vivid and happy portraitures in Touchwood, MacTurk, and the recluse minister of St Ronan's; — that the descriptions of natural scenery might rank with any he had given; — and, finally, that the whole character of Clara Mowbray, but especially its developement in the third volume, formed an original creation, destined

* Three vols. quarto. London, 1821

to be classed by posterity with the highest efforts of tragic romance. Some Edinburgh critics, however—(both talkers and writers)—received with considerable grudgings certain sarcastic sketches of the would-be-fine life of the watering-place — sketches which their Southern brethren had kindly suggested *might* be drawn from *Northern* observation, but could never appear better than fantastic caricatures to any person who had visited even a third-rate English resort of the same nominal class. There is no doubt that the author dashed off these minor personages with, in the painter's phrase, *a rich brush;* but I must confess my belief that they have far more truth about them than his countrymen seemed at the time willing to allow; and if any of my readers, whether Scotch or English, has ever happened to spend a few months, not in either an English or a Scotch watering-place of the present day, but among such miscellaneous assemblages of British nondescripts and outcasts, — including often persons of higher birth than any of the *beau monde* of St Ronan's Well, — as now infest many towns of France and Switzerland, he will, I am satisfied, be inclined to admit that, while the Continent was shut, as it was in the days of Sir Walter's youthful wanderings, a trip to such a sequestered place as Gilsland, or Moffat, or Innerleithen — (almost as inaccessible to London duns and bailiffs as the Isle of Man was then, or as Boulogne and Dieppe are now) — may have supplied the

future novelist's note-book with authentic materials even for such worthies as Sir Bingo and Lady Binks, Dr Quackleben, and Mr Winterblossom. It should, moreover, be borne in mind, that during our insular blockade, northern watering-places were not alone favoured by the resort of questionable characters from the south. The comparative cheapness of living, and especially of education, procured for Sir Walter's "own romantic town" a constant succession of such visitants, so long as they could have no access to the *tables d'hôte* and dancing-masters of the Continent. When I first mingled in the society of Edinburgh, it abounded with English, broken in character and in fortune, who found a mere title (even a baronet's one) of consequence enough to obtain for them, from the proverbially cautious Scotch, a degree of attention to which they had long been unaccustomed among those who had chanced to observe the progress of their personal histories; and I heard many name, when the novel was new, a booby of some rank, in whom they recognised a sufficiently accurate prototype for Sir Bingo.

Sir Walter had shown a remarkable degree of good-nature in the completion of this novel. When the end came in view, James Ballantyne suddenly took vast alarm about a particular feature in the history of the heroine. In the original conception, and in the book as actually written and printed, Miss Mowbray's mock marriage had not halted at the

profane ceremony of the church; and the delicate printer shrunk from the idea of obtruding on the fastidious public the possibility of any personal contamination having been incurred by a high-born damsel of the nineteenth century. Scott was at first inclined to dismiss his friend's scruples as briefly as he had done those of Blackwood in the case of the Black Dwarf:—"You would never have quarrelled with it," he said, "had the thing happened to a girl in gingham:—the silk petticoat can make little difference." James reclaimed with double energy, and called Constable to the rescue;—and after some pause, the author very reluctantly consented to cancel and re-write about twenty-four pages, which was enough to obliterate, to a certain extent, the dreaded scandal—and in a similar degree, as he always persisted, to perplex and weaken the course of his narrative, and the dark effect of its catastrophe.

Whoever might take offence with different parts of the book, it was rapturously hailed by the inhabitants of Innerleithen, who immediately identified the most striking of its localities with those of their own pretty village and picturesque neighbourhood, and foresaw in this celebration a chance of restoring the popularity of their long neglected *Well;*—the same to which, as the reader of the first of these volumes may have noticed, Sir Walter Scott had occasionally escorted his mother and sister in the days of boy-

hood. The notables of the little town voted by acclamation that the old name of Innerleithen should be, as far as possible, dropped thenceforth, and that of St Ronan's adopted. Nor were they mistaken in their auguries. An unheard-of influx of water-bibbers forthwith crowned their hopes; and spruce *hottles* and huge staring lodging-houses soon arose to disturb wofully every association that had induced Sir Walter to make Innerleithen the scene of a romance. Nor were they who profited by these invasions of the *genius loci* at all sparing in their demonstrations of gratitude. The traveller reads on the corner of every new erection there, *Abbotsford Place*, *Waverley Row*, *The Marmion Hotel*, or some inscription of the like coinage.

Among other consequences of the revived fame of the place, a yearly festival was instituted for the celebration of *The St Ronan's Border Games*. A club of *Bowmen of the Border*, arrayed in doublets of Lincoln green, with broad blue bonnets, and having the Ettrick Shepherd for Captain, assumed the principal management of this exhibition; and Sir Walter was well pleased to be enrolled among them, and during several years was a regular attendant, both on the Meadow, where (besides archery) leaping, racing, wrestling, stone-heaving, and hammer-throwing, went on opposite to the noble old Castle of Traquair, and at the subsequent banquet, where Hogg, in full costume, always presided as master

of the ceremonies. In fact, a gayer spectacle than that of the *St Ronan's Games*, in those days, could not well have been desired. The Shepherd, even when on the verge of threescore, exerted himself lustily in the field, and seldom failed to carry off some of the prizes, to the astonishment of his vanquished juniors; and the *bon-vivants* of Edinburgh mustered strong among the gentry and yeomanry of Tweeddale to see him afterwards in his glory, filling the president's chair with eminent success, and commonly supported on this — which was, in fact, the grandest evening of his year — by Sir Walter Scott, Professor Wilson, Sir Adam Fergusson, and *Peter* Robertson.

In Edinburgh at least, the play founded, after the usual fashion, on St Ronan's Well, had success far beyond the expectations of the novelist, whatever may have been those of the dramatizer. After witnessing the first representation, Scott wrote thus to Terry — "We had a new piece t'other night from St Ronan's, which, though I should have supposed it ill adapted for the stage, succeeded wonderfully — chiefly by Murray's acting of the Old Nabob. Mackay also made an excellent Meg Dods, and kept his gestures and his action more within the verge of female decorum than I thought possible."

A broad piece of drollery, in the shape of an epilogue, delivered in character by Mackay when he first took a benefit as Meg Dods, is included in the

last edition of Scott's Poetical Works;* but though it caused great merriment at the time in Edinburgh, the allusions are so exclusively local and temporary, that I fear no commentary could ever make it intelligible elsewhere.

* See edition 1834, vol. xi. p. 369.

CHAPTER LX.

Publication of Redgauntlet—Death of Lord Byron —Library and Museum—"The Wallace Chair" — House-Painting, &c. — Anecdotes — Letters to Constable, Miss Edgeworth, Terry, Miss Baillie, Lord Montagu, Mr Southey, Charles Scott, &c.—Speech at the opening of the Edinburgh Academy—Death and Epitaph of Maida —Fires in Edinburgh.

1824.

IMMEDIATELY on the conclusion of St Ronan's Well, Sir Walter began the novel of *Redgauntlet;* —but it had made considerable progress at press before Constable and Ballantyne could persuade him to substitute that title for *Herries.* The book was published in June 1824, and was received at the time somewhat coldly, though it has since, I believe, found more justice. The re-introduction of the adventurous hero of 1745, in the dulness and dimness

of advancing age, and fortunes hopelessly blighted—and the presenting him—with whose romantic portraiture at an earlier period historical truth had been so admirably blended—as the moving principle of events, not only entirely, but notoriously imaginary—this was a rash experiment, and could not fail to suggest many disagreeable and disadvantageous comparisons; yet, had there been no Waverley, I am persuaded the fallen and faded Ascanius of Redgauntlet would have been universally pronounced a masterpiece. About the secondary personages there could be little ground for controversy. What novel or drama has surpassed the grotesquely ludicrous, dashed with the profound pathos, of Peter Peebles—the most tragic of farces?—or the still sadder merriment of that human shipwreck, Nantie Ewart?—or Wandering Willie and his Tale?—the wildest and most rueful of dreams told by such a person, and in such a dialect! Of the young correspondents Darsie Latimer and Allan Fairford, and the Quakers of Mount Sharon, and indeed of numberless minor features in Redgauntlet, no one who has read the first volume of these memoirs will expect me to speak at length here. With posterity assuredly this novel will yield in interest to none of the series; for it contains perhaps more of the author's personal experiences than any other of them, or even than all the rest put together.

This year,—*mirabile dictu!*—produced but one

novel; and it is not impossible that the author had taken deeply into his mind, though he would not *immediately* act upon them, certain hints about the danger of "overcropping," which have been alluded to as dropping from his publishers in 1823. He had, however, a labour of some weight to go through in preparing for the press a Second Edition of his voluminous Swift. The additions to this reprint were numerous, and he corrected his notes, and the Life of the Dean throughout, with considerable care. He also threw off several reviews and other petty miscellanies—among which last occurs his memorable tribute to the memory of Lord Byron, written for Ballantyne's newspaper immediately after the news of the catastrophe at Missolonghi reached Abbotsford.*

The arrangement of his library and museum was,

* See Miscellaneous Prose Works, vol. iv. p. 343. — Mr Andrew Shortrede, who was in 1824 learning the printing business in Edinburgh, says — "Sir Walter came down from the Court of Session to the printing-office the day the intelligence of Byron's death reached Edinburgh, and there dictated to James Ballantyne the article which appeared in the Weekly Journal. I think it was inserted without correction, or revisal, except by Ballantyne. From these circumstances, I with others imagined James had himself produced it in some moment of inspiration; but when I afterwards told him how I had been misled, he detailed *no more* the full, true, and particular history of the article. Separate copies, I remember, were thrown off for some of Byron's friends."—[1389.]

however, the main care of the summer months of this year; and his woods were now in such a state of progress that his most usual exercise out of doors was thinning them. He was an expert as well as powerful wielder of the axe, and competed with his ablest subalterns as to the paucity of blows by which a tree could be brought down. The wood rang ever and anon with laughter while he shared their labours; and if he had taken, as he every now and then did, a whole day with them, they were sure to be invited home to Abbotsford to sup gaily at Tom Purdie's. One of Sir Walter's Transatlantic admirers, by the way, sent him a complete assortment of the tools employed in clearing the Backwoods, and both he and Tom made strenuous efforts to attain some dexterity in using them; but neither succeeded. The American axe, in particular, having a longer shaft than ours, and a much smaller and narrower cutting-piece, was, in Tom's opinion, only fit for paring a *kebbuck* (*i. e.* a cheese of skimmed milk.) The old fashioned large and broad axe was soon resumed; and the belt that bore it had accommodation also for a chissel, a hammer, and a small saw. Among all the numberless portraits, why was there not one representing the "Belted Knight," accoutred with these appurtenances of his forest-craft, jogging over the heather on a breezy morning, with Thomas Purdie at his stirrup, and Maida stalking in advance?

Notwithstanding the numberless letters to Terry

about his upholstery, the far greater part of it was manufactured at home. The most of the articles from London were only models for the use of two or three neat-handed carpenters whom he had discovered in the villages near him: and he watched and directed their operations as carefully as a George Bullock could have done; and the results were such as even Bullock might have admired. The great table in the library, for example (a most complex and beautiful one), was done entirely in the room where it now stands, by Joseph Shillinglaw of Darnick—the Sheriff planning and studying every turn as zealously as ever an old lady pondered the developement of an embroidered cushion. The hangings and curtains, too, were chiefly the work of a little hunch-backed tailor, by name *William* Goodfellow—(save at Abbotsford, where he answered to *Robin*)—who occupied a cottage on Scott's farm of the Broomielees; one of the race who creep from homestead to homestead, welcomed wherever they appear by housewife and handmaiden, the great gossips and newsmen of the parish,—in Scottish nomenclature *cardooers*. Proudly and earnestly did all these vassals toil in his service; and I think it was one of them that, when some stranger asked a question about his personal demeanour, answered in these simple words—"Sir Walter speaks to every man as if they were blood-relations." Not long after he had completed his work at Abbotsford, little Good-

fellow fell sick, and as his cabin was near Chiefswood, I had many opportunities of observing the Sheriff's kind attention to him in his affliction. I can never forget the evening on which the poor tailor died. When Scott entered the hovel he found everything silent, and inferred from the looks of the good women in attendance that their patient had fallen asleep, and that they feared his sleep was the final one. He murmured some syllables of kind regret;— at the sound of his voice the dying tailor unclosed his eyes, and eagerly and wistfully sat up, clasping his hands with an expression of rapturous gratefulness and devotion, that, in the midst of deformity, disease, pain, and wretchedness, was at once beautiful and sublime. He cried with a loud voice, "the Lord bless and reward you," and expired with the effort.

"In the painting of his interior, too, Sir Walter personally directed everything. He abominated the commonplace daubing of walls, panels, doors, and window-boards, with coats of white, blue, or grey, and thought that sparklings and edgings of gilding only made their baldness and poverty more noticeable. He desired to have about him, wherever he could manage it, rich, though not gaudy, hangings, or substantial old-fashioned wainscot-work, with no ornament but that of carving; and where the wood was to be painted at all, it was done in strict imitation of oak or cedar. Except in the drawing-room.

which he abandoned to Lady Scott's taste, all the roofs were in appearance of antique carved oak, relieved by coats of arms duly blazoned at the intersections of beams, and resting on cornices to the eye of the same material, but really composed of casts in plaster of Paris, after the foliage, the flowers, the grotesque monsters and dwarfs, and sometimes the beautiful heads of nuns and confessors, on which he had doated from infancy among the cloisters of Melrose and Roslin. In the painting of these things, also, he had instruments who considered it as a labour of love. The master-limner, in particular, had a devoted attachment to his person; and this was not wonderful, for he, in fact, owed a prosperous fortune to Scott's kind and sagacious counsel tendered at the very outset of his career. A printer's apprentice attracted notice by his attempts with the pencil, and Sir Walter was called upon, after often admiring his skill in representing dogs and horses and the like, to assist him with his advice, as ambition had been stirred, and the youth would fain give himself to the regular training of an artist. Scott took him into his room, and conversed with him at some length. He explained the difficulties and perils, the almost certain distresses, the few and narrow chances of this aspiring walk. He described the hundreds of ardent spirits that pine out their lives in solitary garrets, lamenting over the rash eagerness with which they had obeyed the suggestions of young

ambition, and chosen a career in which success of any sort is rare, and no success but the highest is worth attaining. "You have talents and energy," said he, "but who can say whether you have genius? These boyish drawings can never be relied on as proofs of *that*. If you feel within you such a glow of ambition, that you would rather run a hundred chances of obscurity and penury, than miss *one* of being a Wilkie,—make up your mind, and take the bold plunge; but if your object is merely to raise yourself to a station of wordly comfort and independence,—if you would fain look forward with tolerable assurance to the prospect of being a respectable citizen, with your own snug roof over your head, and the happy faces of a wife and children about you,—pause and reflect well. It appears to me that there is little demand for fine works of the pencil in this country. Not a few artists, who have even obtained high reputation, find employment scarce, and starve under their laurels. I think profit in Britain is, with very rare exceptions, annexed to departments of obvious and direct utility, in which the mass of the people are concerned; and it has often struck me, that some clever fellow might make a good hit, if, in place of enrolling himself among the future Raphaels and Vandykes of the Royal Academy, he should resolutely set himself to introducing something of a more elegant style of house-painting." The young man thus addressed (Mr D

R. Hay) was modest and wise enough to accept the advice with thankfulness, and to act upon it. After a few years he had qualified himself to take charge of all this delicate limning and blazoning at Abbotsford. He is now, I understand, at the head of a great and flourishing establishment in Edinburgh; and a treatise on the Science of Colour, which has proceeded from his pen, is talked of as reflecting high credit on his taste and understanding. Nor should I omit what seems a particularly honourable trait in Mr Hay:—he is said to be one of the most liberal patrons of native art now in existence; in fact, to possess an unrivalled collection of the works of contemporary Scottish painters.

Meantime, the progress of Abbotsford stimulated largely both friends and strangers to contribute articles of curiosity towards its final adornment. I have already alluded with regret to the non-completion of the Poet's own catalogue of his literary and antiquarian rarities, begun under the title of "Reliquiæ Trottcosianæ," and mentioned Mr Train, the affectionate Supervisor of Excise, as the most unwearied and bountiful of all the contributors to the *Museum*. Now, he would fain have his part in the substantial "*plenishing*" also; and I transcribe, as a specimen of his zeal, the account which I have received from himself of the preparation and transmission of one piece of furniture, to which his friend allotted a distinguished place, for it was one of the

two chairs that ultimately stood in his own *sanctum sanctorum*. In those days Mr Train's official residence was at Kirkintilloch, in Stirlingshire; and he says, in his *Memoranda*,—

"Rarbiston, or, as it is now called, Robroyston, where the valiant Wallace was betrayed by Monteith of Ruskie, is only a few miles distant from Kirkintilloch. The walls of the house where the first scene of that disgraceful tragedy was acted were standing, on my arrival in that quarter. The roof was entirely gone; but I observed that some butts of the rafters, built into the wall, were still remaining. As the ruin was about being taken down to make way for the ploughshare, I easily succeeded in purchasing these old stumps from the farmer upon whose ground it stood. When taken out of the building, these pieces of wood were seemingly so much decayed as to be fit only for fuel; but after planing off about an inch from the surface, I found that the remainder of the wood was as hard as a bone, and susceptible of a fine polish. I then resolved upon having a chair of the most antique description made out of these wasted blocks as a memorial of our most patriotic hero, with a feeling somewhat similar to theirs who remember their Saviour in the crucifix.

"In the execution of this undertaking, workmen of various denominations were employed. It was modelled from an old chair in the Palace of Hamilton, and is nearly covered with carved work, repre-

senting rocks, heather, and thistles, emblematic of Scotland, and indented with brass, representing the *Harp of the North*, surrounded with laurels, and supported by targets, claymores, Lochaber axes, war horns, &c. The seat is covered with silk velvet, beneath which is a drawer, containing a book bound in the most primitive form in Robroyston wood, with large clasps. In this book are detailed at length some of the particulars here briefly alluded to, with the affirmations of several persons to whose care the chair was entrusted in the course of making.

" On the (inside) back of the chair is a brass plate, bearing the following inscription:—

THIS CHAIR,
MADE OF THE ONLY REMAINING WOOD
OF THE
HOUSE AT ROBROYSTON,
IN WHICH THE
MATCHLESS SIR WILLIAM WALLACE
'WAS DONE TO DEATH BY FELON HAND
FOR GUARDING WELL HIS FATHERS' LAND,'
IS MOST RESPECTFULLY PRESENTED TO
SIR WALTER SCOTT,
AS A SMALL TOKEN OF GRATITUDE,
BY HIS DEVOTED SERVANT,
JOSEPH TRAIN.

" Exaggerated reports of this chair spread over the adjacent country with a fiery-cross-like speed, and raised public curiosity to such a height, that persons in their own carriages came many miles to

see it. I happened to be in a distant part of my district at the time; but I daresay many persons in Kirkintilloch yet remember how triumphantly the symbolic chair was borne from my lodgings to the bank of the Great Canal, to be there shipped for Abbotsford, in the midst of the town-band playing 'Scots wha hae wi' Wallace bled,' and surrounded by thousands, who made the welkin resound with bursts of national enthusiasm, justifying the couplet of Pope—

> 'All this may be, the people's voice is odd;
> The Scots will fight for Wallace as for God.'"—

Such arrivals as that of "the Wallace Chair" were frequent throughout 1824. It was a happy, and therefore it need hardly be added an ineventful year —his last year of undisturbed prosperity. The little incidents that diversified his domestic interior, and the zeal which he always kept up for all the concerns of his friends, together with a few indications of his opinions on subjects of literary and political interest, will be found in his correspondence, which will hardly require any editorial explanations.

Within, I think, the same week in January, arrived a copy of Montfauçon's Antiquities, in fifteen volumes folio, richly bound in scarlet, the gift of King George IV., and a set of the Variorum Classics, in a hundred and forty volumes octavo, from Mr Constable. Sir Walter says—

"*To Archibald Constable, Esq.*

"Abbotsford, 6th January 1824.

"My Dear Sir,

"Yesterday I had the great pleasure of placing in my provisional library the most splendid present, as I in sincerity believe, which ever an author received from a bookseller. In the shape of these inimitable *Variorums*, who knows what new ideas the Classics may suggest?—for I am determined to shake off the rust which years have contracted, and to read at least some of the most capital of the ancients before I die. Believe me, my dear and old friend, I set a more especial value on this work as coming from you, and as being a pledge that the long and confidential intercourse betwixt us has been agreeable and advantageous to both.—Yours truly,

WALTER SCOTT."

Miss Edgeworth had written to him to enquire about the health of his eldest daughter, and told him some anecdotes of an American dame, whose head had been turned by the Waverley Novels, and who had, among other demonstrations of enthusiam, called her farm in Massachussetts, *Charlie's Hope*. This lady had, it seems, corresponded with Mrs Grant of Laggan, herself for a time one of the "Authors of Waverley," and Mrs Grant, in disclaiming such ho-

nours, had spoken of the real source, in terms of such perfect assurance, that the honest American almost fancied her friend must have heard Scott confess; yet still she was in doubts and tribulations, and unhappy till she could hear more. The theory prevalent in her own neighbourhood was, it seems, that the authorship was a joint-stock business — Sir Walter being one of the partners, and the other an unfortunate lunatic, of whose papers he had got possession during a lucid interval. Scott answers thus:—

"*To Miss Edgeworth, Edgeworthstown, Ireland.*

"Parliament House, 3d Feb. 1824.

"My Dear Miss Edgeworth,

"I answer your kind letter immediately, because I am sure your sisters and you will interest yourselves in Sophia's state of health. My news are not of the best —

'Yet not so ill, but may be well reported.'

On Saturday, 31st January, she had a daughter, but the poor little stranger left us on the Monday following; and though Sophia is very patient in her temper, yet her recovery is naturally retarded, and I am sorry to say she has been attacked in her weak state by those spasms which seem a hereditary disorder in my family,—slightly, however, in compa-

rison of the former occasion; and for the last two days she has been so much recovered as to take a grain or two of calomel, which is specific in the complaint. I have no doubt now, humanly speaking, that her recovery will proceed favourably. I saw her for a quarter of an hour yesterday, which was the first *permanent* visit I have been permitted to make her. So you may conceive we have been anxious enough, living, as is our clannish fashion, very much for and with each other.

" Your American friend, the good-wife of Charlie's Hope, seems disposed, as we say, ' to sin her mercies.' She quarrels with books that amuse her, because she does not know the author; and she gives up chicken-pie for the opposite reason, that she knows too much about the bird's pedigree. On the last point I share her prejudices, and never could eat the flesh of any creature I had known while alive. I had once a noble yoke of oxen, which, with the usual agricultural gratitude, we killed for the table; they said it was the finest beef in the four counties, but I could never taste Gog and Magog, whom I used to admire in the plough. Moreover, when I was an officer of yeomanry, and used to dress my own charger, I formed an acquaintance with a flock of white turkeys, by throwing them a handful of oats now and then when I came from the stable:— I saw their numbers diminish with real pain, and never attempted to eat any of them without being

sick. And yet I have as much of the *rugged and tough* about me as is necessary to carry me through all sorts of duty without much sentimental compunction.

"As to the ingenious system of double authorship, which the Americans have devised for the Waverley novels, I think it in one point of view extremely likely; since the unhappy man, whom they have thought fit to bring on the carpet, has been shut up in a madhouse for many years; and it seems probable that no brain but a madman's could have invented so much stuff, and no leisure but that of a prisoner could have afforded time to write it all. But, if this poor man be the author of these works, I can assure your kind friend that I neither could, would, nor durst have the slightest communication with him on that or any other subject. In fact, I have never heard of him twice for these twenty years or more. As for honest Mrs Grant, I cannot conceive why the deuce I should have selected her for a mother-confessor; if it had been yourself, or Joanna, there might have been some probability in the report; but good Mrs Grant is so very cerulean, and surrounded by so many fetch-and-carry mistresses and misses, and the maintainer of such an unmerciful correspondence, that though I would do her any kindness in my power, yet I should be afraid to be very intimate with a woman whose tongue and pen are rather overpowering. She is an excellent person notwithstand-

ing. Pray, make my respects to your correspondent, and tell her I am very sorry I cannot tell her who the author of Waverley is; but I hope she will do me the justice not to ascribe any dishonourable transactions to me, either in that matter or any other, until she hears that they are likely to correspond with any part of my known character — which, having been now a lion of good reputation on my own deserts for twenty years and upwards, ought to be indifferently well known in Scotland. She seems to be a very amiable person; and though I shall never see Charlie's Hope, or eat her chicken-pies, I am sure I wish health to wait on the one, and good digestion on the other. They are funny people the Americans: I saw a paper in which they said my father was a tailor. If he had been an *honest tailor*, I should not have been ashamed of the circumstance; but he was what may be thought as great a phenomenon, for he was an *honest lawyer*, a cadet of a good family, whose predecessors only dealt in pinking and slashing doublets, not in making them.

" Here is a long letter, and all about trash — but what can you expect? Judges are mumbling and grumbling above me — lawyers are squabbling and babbling around me. The minutes I give to my letter are stolen from Themis. I hope to get to Abbotsford very soon, though only for two or three days, until 12th March, when we go there for some time. Mrs Spicie seems to be recovering from her

asthmatics, which makes a curious case, providing the recovery be completed. Walter came down at Christmas, and speedily assembled three more terriers. One day the whole got off after a hare, and made me remember the basket beagles that Lord Morton used to keep in my youth; for the whole pack opened like hounds, and would have stuck to the chase till they had killed the hare, which would have been like being pricked to death with pins, if we had not licked them off so soon as we could for laughing. This is a dull joke on paper; but imagine the presumption of so many long-backed, short-legged creatures pursuing an animal so very fleet. You will allow it is something ridiculous. I am sure Count O'Halloran would have laughed, and Colonel Heathcock would have been scandalized.* Lady S. sends her best and kindest remembrances, in which she is joined by Anne and Sophia (poor body.) My fair friends, Harriet and Sophia, have a large interest in this greeting, and Lockhart throws himself in with tidings that Sophia continues to mend. — Always, my dear Miss E., most faithfully yours,

WALTER SCOTT."

This is the answer to a request concerning some MS. tragedy, by the late Mrs Hemans, which seems to have been damned at one of the London theatres,

* See "The Absentee," in Miss Edgeworth's Tales of Fashionable Life.

and then to have been tried over again (I know not with what result) at Edinburgh:—

"*To Miss Joanna Baillie, Hampstead.*

"Edinburgh, February 9, 1824.

"My Dear Miss Baillie,

"To hear is to obey, and the enclosed line will show that the Siddonses are *agreeable* to act Mrs Hemans's drama. When you tell the tale say nothing about me, for on no earthly consideration would I like it to be known that I interfered in theatrical matters;—it brings such a torrent of applications which it is impossible to grant, and often very painful to refuse. Everybody thinks they can write blank verse—and *a word of yours to Mrs Siddons*, &c. &c. I had one rogue (to be sure he went mad afterwards, poor fellow) who came to bully me in my own house, until he had almost made the mist of twenty years, as Ossian says, roll backwards from my spirit, in which case he might have come by an excellent good beating. I have great pleasure, however, in serving Mrs Hemans, both on account of her own merit, and because of your patronage. I trust the piece will succeed; but there is no promising, for Saunders is meanly jealous of being thought less critical than John Bull, and may, perhaps, despise to be pleased with what was less fortunate in London. I wish Mrs H. had been on the spot to make any alte-

rations, &c., which the players are always demanding. I will read the drama over more carefully than I have yet done, and tell you if anything occurs. I need hardly apologize for being late in letting you hear all this—for the terror of the cramp attacking poor Sophia in her weak state kept us very feverish; but thank God it did little more than menace her, and the symptoms having now given way, her husband talks of going to town, in which case I intend to take Sophia to Abbotsford, and

> 'Till she be fat as a Norroway seal,
> I'll feed her on bannocks of barleymeal.'*

"Betwixt indolence of her own, and Lockhart's extreme anxiety and indulgence, she has foregone the custom of her exercise, to which, please God, we will bring her back by degrees. Little Charles is come down, just entered at Brazen Nose, where, however, he does not go to reside till October. We must see that he fills up the space between to good advantage; he had always quickness enough to learn, and seems now really to have caught the

> ——'fever of renown,
> Spread from the strong contagion of the gown.'†

"I am sorry for Mr Crabbe's complaint, under which he suffered, I recollect, when he was here in 1822. Did you ever make out how he liked his

* Old Ballad. † Johnson's *Vanity of Human Wishes.*

Scottish tour? He is not, you know, very *outspoken*, and I was often afraid that he was a little tired by the bustle around him. At another time I would have made a point of attending more to his comforts —but what was to be done amid piping, and drumming, and pageants, and provosts, and bailies, and wild Highlandmen by the score? The time would have been more propitious to a younger poet. The fertility you mention is wonderful, but surely he must correct a great deal to bring his verses into the terse and pointed state in which he gives them to the public.—To come back to Mrs Hemans. I am afraid that I cannot flatter myself with much interest that can avail her. I go so little out, and mix so seldom either with the gay or the literary world here, that I am reduced, like Gil Blas, much to the company of my brother clerks and men of business—a seclusion which I cannot say I regret greatly; but anything within my power shall not be left undone. I hope you will make my apology to Mrs Hemans for the delay which has taken place; if anything should occur essential to be known to the authoress, I will write immediately.—Always yours, my dear friend,

WALTER SCOTT."

In the next letter Scott mentions an application from Mr James Montgomery for some contribution to a miscellaneous volume, compiled by that benevolent poet, for the benefit of the little chimney-sweeps.

"*To Miss Baillie, Hampstead.*

"Edinburgh, Feb. 12, 1824

"My Dearest Friend,

"I hasten to answer your kind enquiries about Sophia. You would learn from my last that she was in a fair way of recovery, and I am happy to say she continues so well that we have no longer any apprehensions on her account. She will soon get into her sitting-room again, and of course have good rest at night, and gather strength gradually. I have been telling her that her face, which was last week the size of a sixpence, has in three or four days attained the diameter of a shilling, and will soon attain its natural and most extensive circumference of half-a-crown. If we live till 12th of next month we shall all go to Abbotsford, and between the black doctor and the red nurse (pony and cow, videlicet) I trust she will be soon well again. As for little Johnnie I have no serious apprehensions, being quite of your mind that his knowingness is only a proof that he is much with grown-up people; the child is active enough, and I hope will do well—yet an only child is like a blot at backgammon, and fate is apt to hit it. I am particularly entertained with your answer to Montgomery, because it happened to be precisely the same with mine: he applied to me for a sonnet or an elegy, instead of which I sent him an account

of a manner of constructing chimneys so as scarcely to contract soot; and 2dly, of a very simple and effectual machine for sweeping away what soot does adhere. In all the new part of Abbotsford I have lined the chimney-vents with a succession of cones made of the same stuff with common flower-pots, about one and a half inch thick, and eighteen inches or two feet high, placed one above another, and the vent built round them, so that the smoke passing up these round earthen tubes, finds neither corner nor roughness on which to deposit the soot, and in fact there is very little collected. What sweeping is required is most easily performed by a brush like what housemaids call a *pope's head*, the handle of which consists of a succession of pipes, one slipping on the top of another like the joints of a fishing-rod, so that the maid first sweeps the lower part of the vent, then adds another pipe, and sweeps a little higher, and so on. I have found this quite effectual, but the lining of the chimneys makes the accumulations of soot very trifling in comparison with the common case. Montgomery thanked me, but I think he would rather have had a sonnet; which puts me in mind of Mr Puff's intended comedy of The Reformed Housebreaker, in which he was to put burglary in so ridiculous a point of view, that bolts and bars were likely to become useless by the end of the season.* Verily I have no

* Sheridan's *Critic, Act I.*

idea of writing verse on a grave subject of utility, any more than of going to church in a cinque pace. Lottery tickets and Japan blacking may indeed be exceptions to the general rule. I am quite delighted at us two cool Scots answering in exactly the same manner, but I am afraid your *sooty men* (who are still in regular discharge of their duty) and my *pope's head* and lined vents will not suit the committee, who seem more anxious for poetry than for common sense. For my part, when I write on such subjects, I intend it shall be a grand historico-philosophico poem upon oil-gas, having been made president of the Oil-gas Company of this city; the whale-fishery might be introduced, and something pretty said about *palm* oil, which we think is apt to be popular among our lawyers. I am very sorry for poor Richardson, so much attached to his wife, and suffering so much in her suffering. I hope Tom Campbell gets on pretty well, and wish he would do something to sustain his deserved reputation. I wrote with Mrs Siddons's consent to give Mrs Hemans's tragedy a trial. I hope that her expectations are not very high, for I do not think our ordinary theatrical audience is either more judicious or less fastidious than those of England. They care little about poetry on the stage—it is situation, passion, and rapidity of action, which seem to be the principal requisites for ensuring the success of a modern drama; but I trust, by dint of a special jury, the piece may have a decent

success — certainly I should not hope for much more. I must see they bring it out before 12th March, if possible, as we go to the country that day. I have not seen Mrs Siddons and her brother William Murray since their obliging answer, for one of my colleagues is laid up with gout, and this gives me long seats in the Court, of which you have reaped the fruits in this long epistle from the Clerk's table, done amid the bustle of pleaders, attorneys, and so forth. I will get a frank, however, if possible, for the matter is assuredly not worth a shilling postage. My kindest remembrances attend Mrs Baillie and Mrs Agnes. — Always yours, with sincere respect and affection, WALTER SCOTT."

"*To D. Terry, Esq., London.*

"Abbotsford, Feb. 18, 1824.

"My Dear Terry,

"Your very kind letter reached me here, so that I was enabled to send you immediately an accurate sketch of the windows and chimney-sides of the drawing-room to measurement. I should like the mirrors handsome and the frames plain; the colour of the hangings is green, with rich Chinese figures. On the side of the window I intend to have exactly beneath the glass a plain white side-table of the purest marble, on which to place Chantrey's bust. A truncated pillar of the same marble will be its

support; and I think that, besides the mirror above, there will be a plate of mirror below the table; these memoranda will enable Baldock to say at what price those points can be handsomely accomplished. I have not yet spoken about the marble table; perhaps they may be all got in London. I shall be willing to give a handsome but not an extravagant price. I am much obliged to Mr Baldock for his confidence about the screen. But what says Poor Richard?* 'Those who want money when they come to buy, are apt to want money when they come to pay.' Again Poor Dick observes,

> 'That in many you find the true gentleman's fate;
> Ere his house is complete, he has sold his estate.'

So we will adjourn consideration of the screen till other times; let us first have the needful got and paid for. The stuff for the windows in the drawing-room is the crimson damask silk we bought last year. I enclose a scrap of it that the fringe may be made to match. I propose they should be hung with large handsome brass rings upon a brass cylinder, and I believe it would be best to have these articles from London—I mean the rings and cylinders; but I dislike much complication in the mode of drawing them separate, as it is eternally going wrong; those which divide in the middle, drawing back on each side like

* See the works of Dr. Franklin.

the curtains of an old-fashioned bed, and when drawn back are secured by a loop and tassel, are, I think, the handsomest, and can easily be made on the spot; the fringe should be silk, of course. I think the curtains of the library, considering the purpose of the room, require no fringe at all. We have, I believe, settled that they shall not be drawn in a line across the recess, as in the drawing-room, but shall circle along the inside of the windows. I refer myself to Mr Atkinson about the fringe, but I think a little mixture of gold would look handsome with the crimson silk. As for the library, a yellow fringe, if any I send a draught of the windows enclosed; the architraves are not yet up in the library, but they are accurately computed from the drawings of my kind friend Mr Atkinson. There is plenty of time to think about these matters, for of course the rooms must be painted before they are put up. I saw the presses yesterday; they are very handsome, and remind me of the awful job of arranging my books. About July, Abbotsford will, I think, be finished, when I shall, like the old Duke of Queensberry who built Drumlanrig, fold up the accounts in a sealed parcel, with a label bidding 'the deil pike out the een of any of my successors that shall open it.' I beg kind love to Mrs Terry, Walter the Great, and Missy; delicious weather here, and birds singing St Valentine's matins as if it were April.—Yours ever,

WALTER SCOTT.

"P S.—Pride will have a fall—I have a whelp of one of Dandie Dinmont's Pepper and Mustard terriers, which no sooner began to follow me into the house than Ourisque fell foul. The Liddisdale devil cocked its nose, and went up to the scratch like a tigress, downed Ourie, and served her out completely—since which Ourie has been so low that it seems going into an atrophy, and Ginger takes all manner of precedence, as the best place by the fire, and so on, to Lady Scott's great discomfiture.—Single letters by post: double to Croker—with a card enclosed, asking a frank to me."

About this time Miss Edgeworth announced the approaching marriage of her sister Sophia to Mr Fox.

"*To Miss Edgeworth, Edgeworthstown.*

"Edinburgh, February 24, 1824

"My Dear Miss Edgeworth,

"I do not delay a moment to send my warmest and best congratulations upon the very happy event which is about to take place in your family, and to assure you that you do me but common justice in supposing that I take the warmest interest in whatever concerns my young friend. All Abbotsford to an acre of Poyais* that she will make an excellent wife;

* One of the bubbles of this bubble period, was a scheme of colonization at Poyais.

and most truly happy am I to think that she has such an admirable prospect of matrimonial happiness, although at the expense of thwarting the maxim, and showing that

'The course of true love *sometimes may* run smooth.'

It will make a pretty vista, as I hope and trust, for you, my good friend, to look forwards with an increase of interest to futurity. Lady Scott, Anne, and Sophia, send their sincere and hearty congratulations upon this joyful occasion. I hope to hear her sing the *petticoat of red* some day in her own house. I should be apt to pity you a little amid all your happiness, if you had not my friend Miss Harriet, besides other young companions whose merits are only known to me by report, to prevent your feeling so much as you would otherwise the blank which this event must occasion in your domestic society. Sophia, I hope, will be soon able to make her own gratulations; she is recovering very well, and overjoyed to hear such good news from your quarter. I have been on a short trip to Abbotsford, to set painters to work to complete what Slender would call, 'Mine own great chamber;' and on my return I was quite delighted to see the change on my daughter. Little John Hugh is likewise much better, but will require nursing and care for some years at least. Yet I have often known such hothouse plants bear the open

air as well as those that were reared on the open moor.

"I am not at all surprised at what you say of the Yankees. They are a people possessed of very considerable energy, quickened and brought into eager action by an honourable love of their country and pride in their institutions; but they are as yet rude in their ideas of social intercourse, and totally ignorant, speaking generally, of all the art of good-breeding, which consists chiefly in a postponement of one's own petty wishes or comforts to those of others. By rude questions and observations, an absolute disrespect to other people's feelings, and a ready indulgence of their own, they make one feverish in their company, though perhaps you may be ashamed to confess the reason. But this will wear off, and is already wearing away. Men, when they have once got benches, will soon fall into the use of cushions. They are advancing in the lists of our literature, and they will not be long deficient in the *petite morale*, especially as they have, like ourselves, the rage for travelling. I have seen a new work, the Pilot, by the author of the Spy and Pioneer. The hero is the celebrated Paul Jones, whom I well remember advancing above the island of Inchkeith with three small vessels to lay Leith under contribution. I remember my mother being alarmed with the drum, which she had heard all her life at eight o'clock, conceiving it to be the pirates who had landed. I never

saw such a change as betwixt that time, 1779, in the military state of a city. Then Edinburgh had scarce three companies of men under arms; and latterly she furnished 5000, with complete appointments, of cavalry, artillery, and infantry—enough to have eaten Paul Jones and his whole equipage. Nay, the very square in which my father's house stands could even then have furnished a body of armed men sufficient to have headed back as large a party as he could well have landed. However, the novel is a very clever one, and the sea-scenes and characters in particular are admirably drawn; and I advise you to read it as soon as possible. I have little news to send from Abbotsford; *Spice* is much better, though still asthmatic; she is extremely active, and in high spirits, though the most miserable, thin, long-backed creature I ever saw. She is extremely like the shadow of a dog on the wall; such a sketch as a child makes in its first attempts at drawing a monster—with a large head, four feet, and a most portentous longitude of back. There was great propriety in Miss Harriet's dream after all, for if ever a dog needed six legs, poor Spice certainly requires a pair of additional supporters. She is now following me a little, though the duty of body-guard has devolved for the present on a cousin of hers, a fierce game devil, that goes at everything, and has cowed Ourisque's courage in a most extraordinary degree, to Lady Scott's great vexation. Here is a tale of dogs, and dreams, and

former days—but the only pleasure in writing is to write whatever comes readiest to the pen. My wife and Anne send kindest compliments of congratulation, as also Charles, who has come down to spend four or five months with us; he is just entered at Brazennose—on fire to be a scholar of classical renown, and studying (I hope the humour will last) like a very dragon.—Always, my dear Miss Edgeworth, with best love to the bride and to dear Harriet, very much yours, WALTER SCOTT."

"*To Daniel Terry, Esq., London.*

"Abbotsford, March 13, 1824.

"My Dear Terry,

"We are now arrived here, and in great bustle with painters, which obliges me to press you about the mirrors. If we cannot have them soon, there is now an excellent assortment at Trotter's, where I can be supplied, for I will hardly again endure to have the house turned upside down by upholsterers—and wish the whole business ended, and the house rid of that sort of cattle once for all. I am only ambitious to have one fine mirror over the chimney-piece; a smaller one will do for the other side of the room. Lady Scott has seen some Bannockburn carpets, which will answer very well, unless there are any bespoken. They are putting up my presses, which look very handsome. In the drawing-room,

the cedar doors and windows, being well varnished, assume a most rich and beautiful appearance. The Chinese paper in the drawing-room is most beautiful, saving the two ugly blanks left for these mirrors of d———n, which I dare say you curse as heartily as I do. I wish you could secure a parcel of old caricatures, which can be bought cheap, for the purpose of papering two *cabinets à l'eau.* John Ballantyne used to make great hawls in this way. The Tory side of the question would of course be most acceptable; but I don't care about this, so the prints have some spirit. Excuse this hasty and pressing letter; if you saw the plight we are in, you would pity and forgive. At Baldock, as I have had at you. My mother whips me, and I whip the top. Best compliments to Mrs Terry.—Believe me always yours,

WALTER SCOTT."

"*To Archibald Constable, Esq., Polton House, Lasswade.*

"Abbotsford, 29th March 1824.

"My Dear Constable,

"Since I received your letter I have been on the look-out for a companion for you, and have now the pleasure to send one bred at Abbotsford of a famous race. His name has hitherto been Cribb, but you may change it if you please. I will undertake for his doing execution upon the rats, which

Polton was well stocked with when I knew it some seventeen or eighteen years ago. You must take some trouble to attach Mr Cribb, otherwise he will form low connexions in the kitchen, which are not easily broken off. The best and most effectual way is to feed him yourself for a few days.

"I congratulate you heartily, my good old friend, on your look-forward to domestic walks and a companion of this sort; and I have no doubt your health will gradually be confirmed by it. I will take an early opportunity to see you when we return to Edinburgh. I like the banks of the Esk, which to me are full of many remembrances, among which those relating to poor Leyden must come home to you as well as to me. I am ranging in my improvements — painting my baronial hall with all the scutcheons of the border clans, and many similar devices. For the roof-tree I tried to blazon my own quarterings, and succeeded easily with eight on my father's side; but on my mother's side I stuck fast at the mother of my great-great-grandfather. The ancestor himself was John Rutherford of Grundisnock, which is an appanage of the Hunthill estate, and he was married to Isabel Ker of Bloodylaws. I think I have heard that either this John of Grundisnock or his father was one of the nine sons of the celebrated Cock of Hunthill, who seems to have had a reasonable brood of chickens. Do you know anything of the pedigree of the Hunthills? The Earl

of Teviot was of a younger branch, Rutherford of Quarrelholes, but of the same family. If I could find out these Rutherfords, and who they married, I could complete my tree, which is otherwise correct; but if not, I will paint clouds on these three shields, with the motto *Vixerunt fortes ante.* These things are trifles when correct, but very absurd and contemptible if otherwise. Edgerstane cannot help me; he only knows that my grandfather was a cousin of his — and you know he represents Hunthill. My poor mother has often told me about it, but it was to regardless ears. Would to God I had old Mrs Keddie of Leith, who screeded off all the alliances between the Andersons of Ettrick House and the Andersons of Ettrick Hall, though Michael was the name of every second man, and, to complete the mess, they intermarried with each other. — Yours truly, WALTER SCOTT."

A bad accident in a fox-chase occurred at this time to Sir Walter's dear friend Mr Scott of Gala. The icehouse at Abbotsford was the only one in the neighbourhood that had been filled during the preceding winter, and to Tom Purdie's care in that particular, Mr Scott's numerous friends owed the preservation of his valuable life.

"*To the Lord Montagu, &c., Ditton Park.*

"Edinburgh, 14th April 1824.

"My Dear Lord,

"You might justly think me most unmerciful, were you to consider this letter as a provoke requiring an answer. It comes partly to thank you twenty times for your long and most kind letter, and partly, which I think not unnecessary, to tell you that Gala may now, I trust, be considered as quite out of danger. He has swam for his life though, and barely saved it. It is for the credit of the clan to state that he had no dishonour as a horseman by his fall. He had alighted to put his saddle to rights, and the horse, full of corn and little work, went off with him before he got into his seat, and went headlong down a sort of precipice. He fell at least fifteen feet without stopping, and no one that saw the accident could hope he should be taken up a living man. Yet, after losing a quart of blood, he walked home on foot, and no dangerous symptoms appeared till five or six days after, when they came with a vengeance. He continues to use the ice with wonderful effect, though it seems a violent remedy.

"How fate besets us in our sports and in our most quiet domestic moments! Your Lordship's story of the lamp makes one shudder, and I think it wonderful that Lady Montagu felt no more bad ef-

fects from the mere terror of such an accident; but the gentlest characters have often most real firmness. I once saw something of the kind upon a very large scale. You may have seen at Somerset House an immense bronze chandelier with several hundred burners, weighing three or four tons at least. On the day previous to the public exhibition of the paintings, the Royal Academicians are in use, as your Lordship knows, to give an immensely large dinner-party to people of distinction, supposed to be patrons of the art, to literary men, to amateurs in general, and the Lord knows whom besides. I happened to be there the first time this ponderous mass of bronze was suspended. It had been cast for his Majesty, then Prince Regent, and he not much liking it — I am surprised he did not, as it is very ugly indeed — had bestowed it on the Royal Academicians. Beneath it was placed, as at Ditton, a large round table, or rather a tier of tables, rising above each other like the shelves of a dumb-waiter, and furnished with as many glasses, tumblers, decanters, and so forth, as might have set up an entire glass shop — the numbers of the company, upwards of 150 persons, requiring such a supply. Old West presided, and was supported by Jockey of Norfolk on the one side, and one of the royal Dukes on the other. We had just drunk a preliminary toast or two, when — the Lord preserve us! — a noise was heard like that which precedes an earthquake — the

links of the massive chain by which this beastly lump of bronze was suspended, began to give way, and the mass descending slowly for several inches, encountered the table beneath, which was positively annihilated by the pressure, the whole glass-ware being at once destroyed. What was very odd, the chain, after this manifestation of weakness, continued to hold fast; the skilful inspected it and declared it would yield no farther — and we, I think to the credit of our courage, remained quiet, and continued our sitting. Had it really given way, as the architecture of Somerset House has been in general esteemed unsubstantial, it must have broke the floor like a bombshell, and carried us all down to the cellars of that great national edifice. Your Lordship's letter placed the whole scene in my recollection. A fine paragraph we should have made.*

"I think your Lordship will be much pleased with the fine plantation on Bowden Moor. I have found an excellent legend for the spot. It is close by the grave of an unhappy being, called *Wattie Waeman* (whether the last appellative was really his name, or has been given him from his melancholy fate, is uncertain), who being all for love and a little for stealing, hung himself there seventy or eighty years since (*quere*, where did he find a tree?) at once to revenge

* This story is also told in Scott's Essay on the Life of Kemble. See Quarterly Review, No. 67, or Miscellaneous Prose Works, vol. xx. pp. 195–7.

himself of his mistress and to save the gallows a labour. Now, as the place of his grave and of his suicide is just on the verge where the Duke's land meets with mine and Kippilaw's — (you are aware that where three lairds' lands meet is always a charmed spot) — the spirit of Wattie Waeman wanders sadly over the adjacent moors, to the great terror of all wandering wights who have occasion to pass from Melrose to Bowden. I begin to think which of his namesakes this omen concerns, for I take Walter Kerr of Kippilaw to be out of the question. I never heard of a Duke actually dying for love, though the Duke in the Twelfth Night be in an alarming way. On the other hand, Sir John Græme of the West Countrie, who died for cruel Barbara Allan, is a case in point against the Knight. Thus, in extreme cases, your Duke loses his head, whereas your Knight or Esquire is apt to retain it upon a neck a little more elongated than usual. I will pursue the discussion no further, as the cards appear to turn against me. The people begin to call the plantation Waeman's Wood — rather a good name.

"It is quite impossible your Lordship should be satisfied with the outside view of my castle, for I reckon upon the honour of receiving your whole party, *quotquot adestis*, as usual, in the interior. We have plenty of room for a considerable number of friends at bed as well as board. Do not be alarmed by the report of the gas, which was quite true, but

reflects no dishonour on that mode of illumination. I had calculated that fifteen hundred cubic feet of gas would tire out some five-and-twenty or thirty pair of feet of Scotch dancers, but it lasted only till six in the morning, and then, as a brave soldier does on his post, went out when burned out. Had I kept the man sitting up for an hour or two to make the gas as fast as consumed, I should have spoiled a good story.

"My hall is in the course of having all the heavy parts of my armorial collection bestowed upon it, and really, though fanciful, looks very well, and I am as busy as a bee, disposing suits of armour, battle-axes, broadswords, and all the knick-nacks I have been breaking my shins over in every corner of the house for these seven years past, in laudable order and to the best advantage.

"If Mr Blakeney be the able person that fame reports him, he will have as great a duty to perform as his ancestor at Stirling Castle;* for to keep so young a person as my chief, in his particular situation, from the inroads of follies, and worse than follies, requires as much attention and firmness as to keep Highland claymores and French engineers out of a fortified place. But there is an admirable garrison in the fortress — kind and generous feelings, and a strong sense of honour and duty which

* General Blakeney, grandfather to Lord M.'s friend, was governor of Stirling Castle in 1745.

Duke Walter has by descent from his father and grandfather. God send him life and health, and I trust he will reward your Lordship's paternal care, and fulfil my hopes. They are not of the lowest, but such as must be entertained by an old and attached friend of the family who has known him from infancy. My friend Lord John wants the extreme responsibility of his brother's situation, and may afford to sow a few more wild oats, but I trust he will not make the crop a large one. Lord * * * and his tutor have just left us for the south, after spending three or four days with us. They could not have done worse than sending the young Viscount to Edinburgh, for though he is really an unaffected natural young man, yet it was absurd to expect that he should study hard when he had six invitations for every hour of every evening. I am more and more convinced of the excellence of the English monastic institutions of Cambridge and Oxford. They cannot do all that may be expected, but there is at least the exclusion of many temptations to dissipation of mind; whereas with us, supposing a young man to have any pretensions to keep good society — and, to say truth, we are not very nice in investigating them — he is almost pulled to pieces by speculating mammas and flirting misses. If a man is poor, plain, and indifferently connected, he may have excellent opportunities of study at Edinburgh; otherwise he should beware of it.

"Lady Anne is very naughty not to take care of herself, and I am not sorry she has been a *little* ill, that it may be a warning. I wish to hear your Lordship's self is at Bath. I hate unformed complaints. A doctor is like Ajax — give him light, and he may make battle with a disease; but, no disparagement to the Esculapian art, they are bad guessers. My kindest compliments, I had almost said *love*, attend Lady Isabella. We are threatened with a cruel deprivation in the loss of our friend Sir Adam, the first of men. A dog of a banker has bought his house for an investment of capital, and I fear he must trudge. Had I still had the Highland piper* in my service, who would not have refused me such a favour, I would have had him dirked to a certainty — I mean this cursed banker. As it is, I must think of some means of poisoning his hot rolls and butter, or setting his house on fire, by way of revenge. It is a real affliction. I am happy to hear of Lady Margaret's good looks. I was one of her earliest acquaintance, and at least half her godfather, for I took the vows on me for somebody or other, who, I daresay, has never thought half so often of her as I have done. And so I have written out my paper, and, I fear, your Lordship's patience. My respectful compliments attend Lady Montagu and the young ladies of Ditton. — Always most truly yours,

WALTER SCOTT."

* John of Skye had left Abbotsford — but he soon returned.

The estate of Gattonside was purchased about this time by Mr George Bainbridge of Liverpool — and Sir Adam and Lady Fergusson, to Scott's great regret, went a year or two afterwards to another part of Scotland. The "cursed banker," however, had only to be known to be liked and esteemed. Mr Bainbridge had, among other merits, great skill in sports — especially in that which he has illustrated by the excellent manual entitled "The Fly-fisher's Guide;" and Gattonside-house speedily resumed its friendly relations with Abbotsford.

The next letter was in answer to one in which Lord Montagu had communicated his difficulties about fixing to which of the English Universities he should send the young Duke of Buccleuch.

"*To the Lord Montagu, &c. &c.*

"Edinburgh, 15th June 1824.

"My Dear Lord,

"I was much interested by your Lordship's last letter. For some certain reasons I rather prefer Oxford to Cambridge, chiefly because the last great University was infected long ago with liberalism in politics, and at present shows some symptoms of a very different heresy, which is yet sometimes blended with the first — I mean enthusiasm in religion — not that sincere zeal for religion, in which mortals cannot be too fervid, but the far more doubtful en-

thusiasm which makes religion a motive and a pretext for particular lines of thinking in politics and in temporal affairs. This is a spirit which, while it has abandoned the lower classes — where perhaps it did some good, for it *is* a guard against gross and scandalous vice — has transferred itself to the upper classes, where, I think, it can do little but evil, — disuniting families, setting children in opposition to parents, and teaching, as I think, a new way of going to the Devil for God's sake. On the other hand, this is a species of doctrine not likely to carry off our young friend; and I am sure Mr Blakeney's good sense will equally guard him against political mistakes — for I should think my friend Professor Smyth's historical course of lectures likely to be somewhat Whiggish, though I daresay not improperly so. Upon the whole, I think the reasons your Lordship's letter contains in favour of Cambridge are decisive, although I may have a private wish in favour of Christ Church, which I daresay will rear its head once more under the new Dean.* The neighbourhood of Newmarket is certainly in some sort a snare for so young persons as attend college at Cambridge: but, alas! where is it that there be not snares of one kind or other? Parents, and those who have the more delicate task of standing in the room of parents, must weigh objections and advantages, and without

* Dr Samuel Smith became Dean of Christ Church in 1824

expecting to find any that are without risk, must be content to choose those where the chances seem most favourable. The turf is no doubt a very forceful temptation, especially to a youth of high rank and fortune. There is something very flattering in winning, when good fortune depends so much on shrewdness of observation, and, as it is called, knowingness; the very sight is of an agitating character; and perhaps there are few things more fascinating to young men, whose large fortune excludes the ordinary causes of solicitude, than the pleasures and risks of the race course; and though, when indulged to excess, it leads to very evil consequences, yet, if the Duke hereafter should like to have a stud of racers, he might very harmlessly amuse himself in that way, provided he did not suffer it to take too eager possession of his mind, or to engross his time. Certainly one would rather he had not the turn at all, but I am far more afraid of sedentary games of chance, for wasting time and fortune, than I am of any active out-of-doors sport whatsoever.

" Old Paradise did not number a neighbourhood among its pleasures; but Gattonside has that advantage, and great will be the regret of the said neighbours, if Sir Adam and Lady Eve are turned out. I parted with them at Blair-Adam on this day—for, taking a fit of what waiting maids call *the clevers*, I started at six this morning, and got here to break

fast. As it blew hard all night, there was a great swell on the ferry, so that I came through

'Like Chieftain to the Highlands bound,
Crying, boatman, "do not tarry —"'*

or rather,

'Like Clerk unto the Session bound'

"I could have borne a worse toss, and even a little danger, since the wind brought rain, which is so much wanted. One set of insects is eating the larch — another the spruce. Many of the latter will not, I think, recover the stripping they are receiving. Crops are looking well, except the hay, which is not looking at all. The sheep are eating roasted grass, but will not be the worse mutton, as I hope soon to prove to your Lordship at Abbotsford. — I am always, my dear Lord,

Yours faithful to command,
WALTER SCOTT.

"P.S. — I am here, according to the old saying, *bird-alane;* for my son Charles is fishing at Lochleven, and my wife and daughter (happy persons!) are at Abbotsford. I took the opportunity to spend two days at Tyninghame. Lord Haddington complains of want of memory, while his conversation is

* Campbell's "Lord Ullin's Daughter."

as witty as a comedy, and his anecdote as correct as a parish register.*

"I will be a suitor for a few acorns this year, if they ripen well at Ditton, or your other forests. Those I had before from you (raised in the nursery, not planted out) are now fine oak plants."

Among Scott's visiters of the next month, first in Edinburgh, and afterwards on Tweedside, were the late amiable and venerable Dr Hughes, one of the Canons-residentiary of St Paul's, and his warm-hearted lady. The latter had been numbered among his friends from an early period of life, and a more zealously affectionate friend he never possessed. On her way to Scotland she had halted at Keswick to visit Mr Southey, whom also she had long known well, and corresponded with frequently. Hence the following letters.

"*To Robert Southey, Esq., Keswick, Cumberland.*

"My Dear Southey,

"Do you remember Richardson's metaphor of two bashful lovers running opposite to each other in parallel lines, without the least chance of union, until some good-natured body gives a shove to the

* Charles, eighth Earl of Haddington — remarkable for the graces of his person and the humour of his conversation — died in March 1828, aged 76.

one, and a shove to the other, and so leads them to form a junction? Two lazy correspondents may, I think, form an equally apt subject for the simile, for here have you and I been silent for I know not how many years, for no other reason than the uncertainty which wrote last, or which was in duty bound to write first. And here comes my clever, active, bustling friend Mrs Hughes, and tells me that you regret a silence which I have not the least power of accounting for, except upon the general belief that I wrote you a long epistle after your kind present of the Lay of the Laureate, and that I have once every week proposed to write you a still longer, till shame of my own indolence confirmed me in my evil habits of procrastination—when here comes good Mrs Hughes, gives me a shake by the collar, and assures me that you are in pretty nearly the same case with myself—and, as a very slight external impulse will sometimes drive us into action when a long succession of internal resolutions have been made and broke, I take my pen to assure my dear Southey that I love him as well as if our correspondence had been weekly or daily.

"The years which have gone by have found me dallying with the time, and you improving it as usual —I tossing my ball and driving my hoop, a grey-headed schoolboy, and you plying your task unremittingly for the instruction of our own and future ages. Yet I have not been wholly idle or useless—

witness five hundred acres of moor and moss, now converted into hopeful woodland of various sizes, to the great refreshment, even already, of the eyes of the pilgrims who still journey to Melrose. I wish you could take a step over the Border this season with Mrs Southey, and let us have the pleasure of showing you what I have been doing. I twice intended an invasion of this sort upon your solitude at Keswick—one in spring 1821, and then again in the summer of the same year when the coronation took place. But the convenience of going to London by the steam-packet, which carries you on whether you wake or sleep, is so much preferable to a long land journey, that I took it on both occasions. The extreme rapidity of communication, which places an inhabitant of Edinburgh in the metropolis sooner than a letter can reach it by the post, is like to be attended with a mass of most important consequences—some, or rather most of them good, but some also which are not to be viewed without apprehension. It must make the public feeling and sentiment of London, whatever that may chance to be, much more readily and emphatically influential upon the rest of the kingdom, and I am by no means sure that it will be on the whole desirable that the whole country should be as subject to be moved by its example as the inhabitants of its suburbs. Admitting the metropolis to be the heart of the system, it is no sign of health when the blood flows too

rapidly through the system at every pulsation. Formerly, in Edinburgh and other towns, the impulse received from any strong popular feeling in London was comparatively slow and gradual, and had to contend with opposite feelings and prejudices of a national or provincial character; the matter underwent a reconsideration, and the cry which was raised in the great mart of halloo and humbug was not instantly echoed back, as it may be in the present day and present circumstances, when our opinion, like a small drop of water brought into immediate contiguity with a bigger, is most likely to be absorbed in and united with that of the larger mass. However, you and I have outlived so many real perils, that it is not perhaps wise to dread those that are only contingent, especially where the cause out of which they arise brings with it so much absolute and indisputable advantage.

"What is Wordsworth doing? I was unlucky in being absent when he crossed the Border. I heartily wish I could induce him to make a foray this season, and that you and Mrs Southey, and Miss Wordsworth, my very good and well remembered friend, could be of the party. Pray think of this, for the distance is nothing to well resolved minds, and you in particular owe me a visit. I have never quite forgiven your tour in Scotland without looking in upon my poor premises. Well, as I have re-appeared like your floating island, which I see the newspapers

aver hath again, after seven years' soaking, become visible to mortal ken, it would not be fair in me to make my visit too long a one — so, with kindest respects to Mrs Southey, in which my wife sincerely joins, I am always most truly yours,

WALTER SCOTT.

"8th July 1824, Edinburgh.

"Address Abbotsford, Melrose.

"You may have heard that about four years since I was brought to death's door by a violent, and at the same time most obstinate complaint — a sort of spasms in the stomach or diaphragm, which for a long time defied medicine. It gave way at length to a terrific course of calomel, such as made the cure almost as bad as the disease. Since that time, I have recovered even a better portion of health than I generally had before, and that was excellent. I do not indeed possess the activity of former days, either on foot or horseback, but while I can ride a pony, and walk five or six miles with pleasure, I have no reason to complain. The rogue Radicals had nearly set me on horseback again, but I would have had a good *following* to help out my own deficiences, as all my poor neighbours were willing to fight for *Kirk* and *King*."

Mr Southey's next letter enclosed a MS. copy of his Ode on the King's Northern Progress of 1822.

Sir Walter, in his reply, adverts to the death of Louis XVIII., which occurred on the 17th of September 1824—and prophesies the fate of his successor.

" *To Robert Southey, Esq., Keswick, Cumberland.*

" Bowhill, 26th Sept. 1824.

" My Dear Southey,

" I did not immediately thank you for your beautiful poem on the King's Visit, because I was afraid you might think that I was trespassing too much on time which is always well employed; but I must not let the ice settle again on the stream of our correspondence, and therefore, while I have a quiet morning, I employ part of it to thank you for the kindness you have done me as a friend, and still more for the honour you have bestowed on my country. I hope these verses are one day to see the light, and am too much personally interested not to expect that period with impatience.

" I had a letter from Gifford some time since, by which I perceive with regret he renounces further management of the Quarterly. I scarce guess what can be done by Murray in that matter, unless he could prevail on you to take the charge. No work of the kind can make progress (though it may be kept afloat) under a mere bookselling management. And the difficulty of getting a person with sufficient independence of spirit, accuracy of judgment, and

extent of knowledge, to exercise the profession of Aristarch, seems very great. Yet I have been so long out of the London circles that new stars may have arisen, and set for aught I know, since I was occasionally within the hemisphere.

"The King of France's death, with which one would think I had wondrous little to do, has produced to me the great disappointment of preventing Canning's visit. He had promised to spend two or three days at Abbotsford on his road to Edinburgh,* and it is the more provoking, as I daresay, after all, there is no farther occasion for his being at his post than arises from matter of mere form, since I suppose there is no reason to think that Charles X. will change the line of policy adopted by his brother. I remember him in Edinburgh about 1794, one of the most elegant men in address and exterior whom I ever saw. Strange times we have lived in! I am speaking of Charles X. as a Frenchman of 1661 might have spoken of Charles II. By the way, did you ever observe how easy it would be for a good historian to run a parallel betwixt the great Rebellion and the French Revolution, just substituting the spirit of fanaticism for that of soi-disant philo-

* Mr Canning spent some part of the summer of 1824 in a visit to the Marquess Wellesley, then Lord Lieutenant of Ireland; and had proposed to return from Dublin by the way of Scotland. I think there was to have been a public dinner in his honour at Edinburgh.

sophy. But then how the character of the English would rise—whether you considered the talents and views of the great leaders on either side, or the comparative moderation and humanity with which they waged their warfare! I sometimes think an instructive comparative view might be made out, and it would afford a comfortable augury that the Restoration in either case was followed by many amendments in the Constitution. I hope Louis Baboon will not carry the matter so far as to require completing the parallel by a second Revolution—but it would be very singular if the devotion of this King to the Catholic priests and forms should occasion such a catastrophe. Heber has promised to come down here, and if so, I will perhaps return with him as far as Rokeby, and, if we can, take Keswick on our way, were it but to see you for an hour. All this, however, is speculation. I am just sending off my younger son to Oxford. My eldest is an officer in the 15th Hussars, and I believe will soon get that object of every young officer's ambition, a troop, which would be great luck.—Believe me, dear Southey, most truly yours, WALTER SCOTT."

In October of this year, Sir Walter's son Charles began his residence at Brazen-nose College, Oxford. The adoption of this plan implied finally dropping the appointment in the civil service of the East-India Company, which had been placed at his dis

posal by Lord Bathurst in the spring of 1820; a step, I need not observe, which, were there any doubt on that subject, would alone be sufficient to prove, to the conviction of the most envious sceptic, that the young gentleman's father at this time considered his own worldly fortunes as in a highly prosperous situation. A writership in India is early independence; — in the case of a son of Scott, so conducting himself as not to discredit the name he inherited, it could hardly have failed to be early wealth. And Sir Walter was the last man to deprive his boy of such safe and easy prospects of worldly advantage, turning him over to the precarious chances of a learned profession in Great Britain, unless in the confidence that his own resources were so great as to render ultimate failure in such a career a matter of no primary importance.

The Vicar of Lampeter, meanwhile, had become a candidate for the rectorship of a new classical academy, founded this year at Edinburgh; and Sir Walter Scott's influence was zealously exerted in behalf of his son's learned and estimable tutor. Mr Williams was successful in his object; and at the opening of the institution (1st October) the Poet appeared in Edinburgh to preside over the ceremonial in which this excellent friend was so deeply concerned. I transcribe what follows from a report prepared at the time (but never until now published)

by the honorary secretary of the academy, Mr John Russell, W. S.:—

"The Rev. Sir Henry Moncreiff Wellwood, Bart.* (minister of the parish), at the request of Sir Walter Scott, opened the business of the meeting, by an eloquent and impressive prayer, in which he invoked the blessing of the Almighty on the Institution.

"Sir Walter Scott then rose, and observed, that it had been determined by the Directors, that some account should be given on this occasion of the nature and meaning of the Institution. He wished that some one better qualified had been appointed for this purpose; but as the duty had been imposed upon him, he should endeavour to discharge it as briefly as possible. In Scotland, and before such an assembly, it was unnecessary for him to enlarge on the general advantages of education. It was that which distinguished man from the lower animals in the creation — which recorded every fact of history, and transmitted them in perfect order from one generation to another. Our forefathers had shown their sense of its importance by their conduct; but they could little have conceived the length to which discoveries in science and literature had gone in this age; and those now present could as little anticipate to what extent posterity might carry them. Future ages might probably speak of the knowledge of the 18th and 19th centuries, as we now do of that of the 15th and 16th. But let them remember that the progress of knowledge was gradual; and as their ancestors had been anxious to secure to them the benefits of education, so let it be said of the present age, that it paved the way for the improvement of the generations which were to follow. He need not repeat to Scotsmen, that at an early period the most anxious solicitude had been shown on this subject. While Scotland was torn with convulsions, and the battle-brand was yet red, our forefathers had sat down to devise the means of spreading the blessings of knowledge

* This venerable clergyman died 9th August 1827, aged 77.

among their posterity, as the most effectual means of preventing those dark and bloody times from recurring. We had but lately sheathed a triumphant sword, and lived now in a period of profound peace; and long, long might it be before the sword was again unsheathed! This was therefore a proper time for improving the institutions of the country, and endeavouring to cause its literature to keep pace with its high martial achievements. In forming an institution like the present, there was something generous and disinterested. The founders of a library might enjoy the benefit of reading in that library— the founder of an hospital had had sometimes the melancholy gratification, in the decline of his fortunes, of reposing under the roof of the asylum which his charity had erected for others: but such could not be the case with those who subscribed for this institution. It was like a torch held out in the hand of a dead man, which imparted light to others, but to the bearer it gave none. He therefore called on the young to attend to the instructions that would be addressed to them in this Academy, erected exclusively for their benefit, and not for that of those by whom it had been founded.

"The establishment of those excellent institutions, the Parochial Schools, had early induced the moral and orderly habits which had so much tended to raise the character of our countrymen. King James, whatever had been his failings in other respects, had attended to the education of the youth, and had founded an institution (the High School), which flourished at this moment, the pride and boast of our City; but, from the great increase of population, its size was now found inadequate to the duty originally intended. Since its establishment, the city had increased to six times the extent it then was; and the great number of subscribers to the present Institution proved the general feeling that something must be done to relieve the Metropolitan school. It was true there were many private seminaries, whose teachers were men of great talent; but schools of that description were not so well calculated to secure the education of children as an institution like the present. It was plain to the

most common understanding, that one man could not teach four or five classes of pupils with the same success that one man could teach one class; that was quite plain. A jealousy had been entertained that the design of the present institution was to hurt the more ancient seminary. Look at those who were the leading members of this society; — many of them who had received their education at the High School, whose fathers and grandfathers had been instructed there, and who also had their children there: they were not capable of entertaining a thought to the prejudice of that seminary. The effect of the present institution would only be to relieve the High School of superfluous scholars, and thereby leave the hands of its teachers more at liberty to educate those who were left. He trusted he should hear nothing more of such an unworthy motive. He was sure there would be no petty jealousies — no rivalry between the two institutions, but the honourable and fair rivalry of scholarship. He was convinced Palinurus would not slumber at the helm, while he beheld another vessel striving to gain the port before him.

"In appropriating the funds which had so liberally been placed at their disposal, the Directors had observed the strictest economy. By the ingenuity of Mr Burn the Architect, whose plans for, and superintendence of the buildings, had been a labour of love, it would be observed, that not much had been lost If they had not the beauty of lavish ornament, they had at least taste and proportion to boast of — a more important part of architecture than high finishing.— The Directors had a more difficult and delicate duty to perform than the rearing of stone walls, in choosing the gentlemen who were to carry into execution their plans; a task important beyond the power of language to describe, from the number of certificates produced by men of talent who were willing to abandon their situations in other seminaries, and to venture the credit of their reputation and prospects in life on this experimental project of ours — a task so delicate, that the Directors were greatly at a loss whom to choose among seventy or eighty individuals, of almost equal merit, and equally capable

of undertaking the task. The one principle which guided the Directors in their selection was — who were most likely to give satisfaction to them and to the public? He trusted they had been successful in the performance of this task. The University of Oxford has given them one of its most learned scholars (the Rector), in the flower of his age, with fifteen years experience as a teacher, and of whose acquirements, in that gentleman's presence, he would not speak in the terms he would employ elsewhere. To him the Directors trusted as the main pillar of the establishment: he was sure also, he would be well supported by the other gentlemen; and that the whole machine would move easily and smoothly.

"But there was still another selection of no mean difficulty. In the formation of a new, they must lose some of the advantages of an ancient and venerable institution. One could not lay his hands on the head of his son, and say, this is the same bench on which I sat; this is the voice which first instructed me.—They had to identify their children with a new institution. But they had something to counterbalance these disadvantages. If they had not the venerable Gothic temple, the long sounding galleries, and turreted walls—where every association was favourable to learning—they were also free from the prejudices peculiar to such seminaries,—the 'rich windows which *exclude* the light, and passages that lead to nothing.' Something might be gained from novelty. The attention of the Directors had been particularly turned to the fact, that while Scotland was, on the whole, the best informed country in Europe, it had not of late produced many eminent classical scholars. The observation of Dr Johnson was well known, that in learning, Scotland resembled a besieged city, where every man had a mouthful, but no man a bellyful. It might be said, in answer to this, that it was better education should be divided into mouthfuls, than served up at the banquet of some favoured individuals, while the great mass were left to starve. But, sturdy Scotsman as he was, he was not more attached to Scotland than to truth; and it must

be admitted, that there was some foundation for the Doctor's remark. The Directors were anxious to wipe off this reproach, and for this purpose had made every provision in their power. They had made some additions to the course adopted in the High School, but in no case had they made any innovation from the mere love of change. It was a part of their plan to lay a foundation for a thorough knowledge of the Latin tongue, by the most precise and careful study of its elemental principles. With this they meant to conjoin the study of Greek, to be begun at an earlier period, and prosecuted to a greater extent, than hitherto was customary in Scotland. It was the language of the fathers of history, and of a people whose martial achievements and noble deeds were the ornament of their pages. At no moment was the study of that beautiful language so interesting as at present, when the people among whom it was still in use, were again, as he trusted, about to emancipate themselves from slavery and barbarism, and take their rank among free nations. There would also be instruction in Writing and Arithmetic — and a class for the study of Mathematics, from which the Directors hoped great advantage would accrue to the pupils. There would be another class in this institution, which was not to be found in any other similar academy — a class for the study of English Literature. It had been justly remarked, that the study of classics had sometimes led to the neglect of our own language, and that some scholars could express themselves better in Latin than in English. To avoid this error, a teacher was added to the institution, who was to instruct the boys in the principles of English Composition, and to connect with this a knowledge of the history of their own country. He would have the youths taught to venerate the patriots and heroes of our own country, along with those of Greece and Rome; to know the histories of Wallace and Bruce, as well as those of Themistocles and of Cæsar; and that the recollection of the fields of Flodden and Bannockburn should not be lost in those of Platæa and Marathon. The Masters would open their classes every morning with prayer; and a portion of Scripture

would be read by one of the boys every Monday morning, before the commencement of the week's labours.

"In conclusion, Sir Walter addressed a few words to his young friends around him. He observed, that the public could not have given a more interesting mark of their confidence in the Managers of the Seminary, than they had done, in placing under their direction these young persons, characterised by the Roman matron as her most precious jewels, for every one of whom he was sensible more than one bosom was at present beating, anxious for their future happiness and prosperity. He exhorted them to give their whole souls and minds to their studies, without which it was little that either their Teachers or Directors could do. If they were destined for any of the learned professions, he begged them to remember that a physician without learning was a mere quack; a lawyer without learning was a pettifogger; and a clergyman without learning was like a soldier without a sword, who had not the means of enforcing the authority of his Divine Master. Next to a conscience void of offence towards God and man, the greatest possession they could have was a well cultivated mind; it was that alone which distinguished them from the beasts that perish. If they went to India or other distant quarters of the globe, it would sweeten their path and add to their happiness. He trusted that his words, poor as they were, would sink into their hearts, and remain on their memories, long after they had forgotten the speaker. He hoped they would remember the words of their reverend friend, who had just implored the blessing of God upon their studies, for they were the outpourings of the soul of one not young in years, nor void of experience; and when they were come to manhood, they might say to their children, 'Thus and thus were we taught, and thus and thus we teach you. By attending to these things we rose to honour and distinction.' Happy (said Sir Walter) will it be if you can say, 'I have followed that which I heard.' May you do so and live!"

The Academy, opened under these auspices, throve from the beginning, and may now be considered as one of the most important among the national establishments of Scotland; nor have Sir Walter's anticipations as to the result of honourable rivalry between it and the old High School been disappointed.

As it happens, I have to place in the same page with Sir Walter's speech in honour of classical learning, the record of a *false quantity* which his generosity may almost be said to have made classical. In the course of that same October, died his faithful friend and servant Maida, the noblest and most celebrated of all his dogs — might I not safely say of all dogs that ever shared the fellowship of man? His exit was announced in this letter to the young Oxonian:—

"*To Charles Scott, Esq., Brazen-nose, College, Oxford.*

"Abbotsford, 22d October 1824.

"My Dear Charles,

"I am glad to hear that you are safely settled at College, I trust with the intention of making your residence there subservient to the purposes of steady study, without which it will only be a waste of expense and of leisure. I believe the matter depends very much on a youth himself, and therefore

I hope to hear that you are strenuously exerting yourself to hold an honourable situation among the students of your celebrated university. Your course will not be unmarked, as something is expected from the son of any literary person; and I sincerely hope in this case those expectations will be amply gratified.

"I am obliged to Mr Hughes* for his kind intentions in your favour, as I daresay that any to whom he introduces you will be acquaintance worth cultivating. I shall be glad to hear that you have taken up your ground at College, and who are like to compose your set. I hope you will make your way to the clever fellows, and not put up with Doldrums. Every man soon falls behind, that does not aspire to keep up with the foremost in the race.

"I have little domestic news to tell you. Old Maida died quietly in his straw last week, after a good supper, which, considering his weak state, was rather a deliverance. He is buried below his monument, on which the following epitaph is engraved —

* John Hughes, Esq. of Oriel College — son of Sir Walter's old friends, Dr and Mrs Hughes — the same whose "Itinerary of the Rhone" is mentioned with high praise in the Introduction to Quentin Durward.—In a poem by Mr Hughes, entitled *Walter Childe*, published in 1838, the reader will find an elegant and affectionate tribute to Sir Walter Scott's memory. See Bentley's Miscellany, No. xvii. p. 433.

though it is great audacity to send Teviotdale Latin to Brazen-nose —

> 'Maidæ Marmoreâ dormis sub imagine Maida,
> Ad januam domini sit tibi terra levis.'

Thus Englished by an eminent hand, —

> 'Beneath the sculptured form which late you wore,
> Sleep soundly, Maida, at your master's door.'

"Yesterday we had our solemn hunt, and killed fourteen hares, — but a dog of Sir Adam's broke her leg, and was obliged to be put to death in the field. Little Johnnie talks the strangest gibberish I ever heard, by way of repeating his little poems. I wish the child may ever speak plain. Mamma, Sophia, Anne, and I, send love. — Always your affectionate father, WALTER SCOTT."

The monument here mentioned was a *leaping-on-stone*, to which the skill of Scott's master-mason had given the shape of Maida recumbent. It had stood by the gate of Abbotsford a year or more before the dog died, and after he was laid under it, his master, dining that evening at Chiefswood, said, over his glass of toddy and cigar, that he had been bothering his brains to make an epitaph for his ancient favourite, but could not please himself. He said it must be in Latin, because *Maida* seemed made on purpose to close a hexameter — and begged, as I was fresher

off the irons than himself, that I would try to help him. The unfortunate couplet above printed was what suggested itself at the moment — and though his own English version of it, extemporized next minute, was so much better, on his way home he gave directions to have it engraved, and engraved it was before many hours had passed. Mr James Ballantyne was the first person that saw it; believing it to be Scott's, he admired it, of course — and of course, also, he thought fit to print it soon after (as Sir Walter's) in his newspaper — but his memory had played him a trick before he reached Edinburgh, and as he printed the lines they showed not only their original blunder, but another of his own creation; he had put *jaces*, for *dormis*. His printing the thing at all was unfortunate; for some friend (I believe it was Lord Minto) had pointed out in the interim the false quantity of *januam*, and the mason was just about to rectify that by substituting some legitimate dactyl or spondee, suggested by this critic, when the newspaper reached Abbotsford. Sir Walter on seeing it said, — "Well, well, since Ballantyne has printed the lines at all, I shan't have any corrections made here — I shall write and tell him of *his* blunder, and let the other stand as it is." But meantime "*Sir Walter Scott's false quantities*" had headed various paragraphs in the newspapers both in Edinburgh and in London; and, strange to say, even the undoubted double blunder of Ballantyne's

edition found gallant defenders. A Mr Lionel Berguer, who, I think, had published some poems, and dedicated them to Scott, was one of these champions: and Sir Walter himself had twice pleaded guilty in the newspapers, before the matter was allowed to rest. It is sufficient to quote the following:—

"*To the Editor of the Morning Post.*

"Abbotsford, Nov. 12, 1824.

"Sir,—As I am a friend to truth, even in trifles, I cannot consent to shelter myself under the classical mantle which Mr LIONEL BERGUER and some unknown friend have chosen to extend, in their charity, over my faults in prosody. The two lines were written in mere whim, and without the least intention of their being made public. In the first line, the word *jaces* is a mistake of the transcriber (whoever took that trouble;) the phrase is *dormis*, which I believe is good prosody. The error in the second line, *ad januam*, certainly exists, and I bow to the castigation. I must plead the same apology which was used by the great Dr JOHNSON, when he misinterpreted a veterinary phrase of ordinary occurrence —"ignorance—pure ignorance" was the cause of my blunder. Forty years ago, longs and shorts were little attended to in Scottish education; and I have, it appears, forgot the little I may then have learned.

I have only to add, that I am far from undervaluing any branch of scholarship because I have not the good fortune to possess it, and heartily wish that those who succeed us may have the benefit of a more accurate classical education than was common in my earlier days.

"The inscription cannot now be altered; but if it remains a memorial of my want of learning, it shall not, in addition, convey any imputation on my candour. I should have been ashamed, at a more stirring time, to ask admission for this plea of guilty; but at present you may think it worth a place in your paper. *Pugna est de paupere regno.*—I remain your obedient servant, WALTER SCOTT."

The culprit whose sin had brought this controversy on Sir Walter, was not in his vicinity when it was going on—nor cognizant of it until he had committed himself; and on the same 12th of November, being the Poet's last day at Abbotsford for the long vacation, he indited the following rhymes—which savour of his recent overhauling of Swift and Sheridan's doggrel epistles.

"*To J. G. Lockhart, Esq., Northumberland Street, Edinburgh.*

"Dear John,—I some time ago wrote to inform his
Fat worship of *jaces*, misprinted for *dormis*;
But that several Southrons assured me the *januam*
Was a twitch to both ears of Ass Priscian's cranium.

You, perhaps, may observe that one Lionel Berguer,
In defence of our blunder appears a stout arguer
But at length I have settled, I hope, all these clatters,
By a *rowt* in the papers — fine place for such matters.
I have, therefore, to make it for once my command, sir,
That my gudeson shall leave the whole thing in my hand, sir,
And by no means accomplish what James says you threaten,
Some banter in Blackwood to claim your dog-Latin.
I have various reasons of weight, on my word, sir,
For pronouncing a step of this sort were absurd, sir.—
Firstly, erudite sir, 'twas against your advising
I adopted the lines this monstrosity lies in;
For you modestly hinted my English translation
Would become better far such a dignified station.
Second — how, in God's name, would my bacon be saved,
By not having writ what I clearly engraved?
On the contrary, I, on the whole, think it better
To be whipped as the thief, than his lousy resetter.
Thirdly — don't you perceive that I don't care a boddle
Although fifty false metres were flung at my noddle,
For my back is as broad and as hard as Benlomon's,
And I treat as I please both the Greeks and the Romans;
Whereas the said heathens might rather look serious
At a kick on their drum from the scribe of Valerius.
And, fourthly and lastly — it is my good pleasure
To remain the sole source of that murderous measure.
So *stet pro ratione voluntas* — be tractile,
Invade not, I say, my own dear little dactyl;
If you do, you'll occasion a breach in our intercourse:
To-morrow will see me in town for the winter-course,
But not at your door, at the usual hour, sir,
My own pye-house daughter's good prog to devour, sir.
Ergo — peace! — on your duty, your squeamishness throttle
And we'll soothe Priscian's spleen with a canny third bottle.

A fig for all dactyls, a fig for all spondees,
A fig for all dunces and dominie Grundys;
A fig for dry thrapples, south, north, east, and west, sir,
Speates and raxes* ere five for a famishing guest, sir;
And as Fatsman† and I have some topics for haver, he'll
Be invited, I hope, to meet me and Dame Peveril,
Upon whom, to say nothing of Oury and Anne, you a
Dog shall be deemed if you fasten your *Janua*.

"P.S.—*Hoc jocose*—but I am nevertheless in literal earnest. You incur my serious displeasure if you move one inch in this contemptible rumpus. So adieu till to-morrow.—Yours affectionately,

W. S."

In the course of that November several of the huge antique buildings, which gave its peculiar cha-

* There is an excellent story (but too long for quotation) in the *Memorie of the Somervilles* (vol. i. p. 240) about an old Lord of that family, who, when he wished preparations to be made for high feasting at his Castle of Cowthally, used to send on a billet inscribed with this laconic phrase, "*Speates and raxes*,"—i. e. *spits and ranges*. Upon one occasion, Lady Somerville (being newly married, and not yet skilled in her husband's hieroglyphics) read the mandate as *spears and jacks*, and sent forth 200 armed horsemen, whose appearance on the moors greatly alarmed Lord Somervillo and his guest, who happened to be no less a person than King James III.—See Scott's *Miscellaneous Prose*, vol. xxii. p. 312.

† *Fatsman* was one of Mr James Ballantyne's many *aliases*. Another (to which Constable mostly adhered) was "Mr Basket-fill"—an allusion to the celebrated printer Baskerville.

racter to the Old Town of Edinburgh, perished by fire; and no one, it may be believed, witnessed this demolition with more regret than Sir Walter. He says to Lord Montagu, on the 18th,—

" My Dear Lord,

" Since I came here I have witnessed a horrible calamity. A fire broke out on Monday night in the High Street, raged all night, and great part of the next day, catching to the steeple of the Tron Church, which being wood was soon in a blaze, and burned like regular fire-works till all was consumed. All this while the flames were spreading down to the Cowgate amongst those closes where the narrowness of the access, and the height of the houses, rendered the approach of engines almost impossible. On Tuesday night, a *second* fire broke out in the Parliament Square, greatly endangering the Courts of Justice, and the Advocates' more than princely Library. By great exertions it was prevented approaching this public building; and Sir William Forbes' bank also escaped. But all the other houses in the Parliament Square are totally destroyed; and I can conceive no sight more grand or terrible, than to see these lofty buildings on fire from top to bottom, vomiting out flames like a volcano from every aperture, and finally crashing down one after another into an abyss of fire, which resembled nothing but hell; for there were vaults of wine and spirits which

sent up huge jets of flame, whenever they were called into activity by the fall of these massive fragments. Between the corner of the Parliament Square and the South Bridge, all is destroyed excepting some new buildings at the lower extremity; and the devastation has extended down the closes, which I hope will never be rebuilt on their present — I should say their *late* form. The general distress is, of course, dreadful. — Ever yours, W. SCOTT."

CHAPTER LXI.

Tales of the Crusaders begun—A Christmas at Abbotsford, in Extracts from the MS. Journal of Captain Basil Hall, R.N.

DEC. 29, 1824—JAN. 10, 1825.

DURING the Winter Session of his Court, Sir Walter resumed his usual course of literary exertion, which the supervision of carpenters, painters, and upholsterers, had so long interrupted. The Tales of the Crusaders were begun; but I defer, for the present, the history of their progress.

Abbotsford was at last finished, and in all its splendour; and at Christmas, a larger party than the house could ever before have accommodated, were assembled there. Among the guests was one who kept a copious journal during his stay, and has kindly furnished me with a copy of it. I shall, therefore, extract such passages as bear immediately upon Sir Walter Scott himself, who certainly was never sub-

jected to sharper observation than that of his ingenious friend Captain Basil Hall.

EXTRACTS FROM CAPTAIN HALL'S JOURNAL.

"Abbotsford, December 29, 1824.

"This morning my brother James and I set out from Edinburgh in the Blucher coach at eight o'clock, and although we heard of snow-storms on the hills, we bowled along without the smallest impediment, and with a fine bright sun and cheerful green fields around us, with only here and there a distant streak of snow in some shady ravine. We arrived in good time—and found several other guests at dinner. . . . . .

"The public rooms are lighted with oil-gas in a style of extraordinary splendour. The passages, also, and the bedrooms, are lighted in a similar manner The whole establishment is on the same footing—I mean the attendance and entertainment—all is in good order, and an air of punctuality and method, without any waste or ostentation, pervades everything. Every one seems at his ease; and although I have been in some big houses in my time, and amongst good folks who studied these sort of points not a little, I don't remember to have anywhere met with things better managed in all respects.

"Had I a hundred pens, each of which at the same time should separately write down an anecdote, I could not hope to record one half of those which our host, to use Spenser's expression, 'Welled out alway.' To write down one or two, or one or two dozen, would serve no purpose, as they were all appropriate to the moment, and were told with a tone, gesture, and look, suited exactly to the circumstances, but which it is of course impossible in the least degree to describe.

"Abbotsford, 30th December.

"This morning Major Stisted, my brother, and I, accompanied Sir Walter Scott on a walk over his grounds, a distance of five or six miles. He led us through his plantations, which are in all stages of advancement, and entertained us all the way with an endless string of anecdotes, more or less characteristic of the scenes we were passing through. Occasionally he repeated snatches of songs, sometimes a whole ballad, and at other times he planted his staff in the ground and related some tale to us, which though not in verse, came like a stream of poetry from his lips. Thus, about the middle of our walk, we had first to cross, and then to wind down the banks of the Huntly-burn, the scene of old Thomas the Rymer's interview with the Queen of the Fairies. Before entering this little glen, he detained us on the heath above till he had related the whole of that

romantic story, so that by the time we descended the path, our imaginations were so worked upon by the wild nature of the fiction, and still more by the animation of the narrator, that we felt ourselves treading upon classical ground; and though the day was cold, the path muddy and scarcely passable, owing to the late floods, and the trees all bare, yet I do not remember ever to have seen any place so interesting as the skill of this mighty magician had rendered this narrow ravine, which in any other company would have seemed quite insignificant.

"On reaching an elevated point near a wild mountain lake, from whence we commanded a view of many different parts of his estate, and saw the progress of his improvements, I remarked that it must be interesting to engage in planting. 'Interesting!' he cried; 'You can have no idea of the exquisite delight of a planter — he is like a painter laying on his colours — at every moment he sees his effects coming out. There is no art or occupation comparable to this; it is full of past, present, and future enjoyment. I look back to the time when there was not a tree here, only bare heath; I look round and see thousands of trees growing up, all of which, I may say almost each of which, have received my personal attention. I remember five years ago looking forward, with the most delighted expectation, to this very hour, and as each year has passed, the expectation has gone on increasing. I do the same now: I an-

ticipate what this plantation and that one will presently be, if only taken care of, and there is not a spot of which I do not watch the progress. Unlike building, or even painting, or indeed any other kind of pursuit, this has no end, and is never interrupted but goes on from day to day, and from year to year. with a perpetually augmenting interest. Farming I hate; what have I to do with fattening and killing beasts, or raising corn only to cut it down, and to wrangle with farmers about prices, and to be constantly at the mercy of the seasons? There can be no such disappointments or annoyances in planting trees.'

"It is impossible to touch for an instant on any theme, but straightway he has an anecdote to fit it. 'What is the name of that bright spot,' I said, 'on which the sun is shining, just there in the line of Cowdenknowes?'—'That,' said he, 'is called *Haxel Cleugh*. I was long puzzled,' he added, 'to find the etymology of this name, and enquired in vain on every hand to discover something suitable. I could learn nothing more than that near the Cleugh there was a spot which tradition said had been a Druidical place of worship. Still this did not help me, and I went on for a long time tormenting myself to no purpose. At length, when I was reading very early one fine summer's morning, I accidentally lighted upon a passage in some German book, which stated that Haxa

was the old German term for a Druidess.* Here, then, the mystery was solved, and I was so enchanted with the discovery, that I was wild with impatience to tell it to some one; so away I mounted up stairs to my wife's room, where she was lying fast asleep. I was well aware that she neither knew nor cared one jot about the matter; that did not signify—tell it I must immediately to some one; so I roused her up, and although she was very angry at being awakened out of her comfortable doze, I insisted upon bestowing Haxa, and Haxel Cleugh, and all my beautiful discovery of the Druid's temple, upon her notwithstanding. Now, don't you understand this?' said he, turning to me—'Have not you sometimes on board your ship hit upon something which delighted you, so that you could not rest till you had got hold of some one down whose throat you might cram it—some stupid dolt of a lieutenant, or some gaping midshipman, on whom in point of fact it was totally thrown away?—but still you had the satisfaction of imparting it, without which half the pleasure is lost.

"Thus we strolled along, borne as it were on this strange stream of song and story. Nothing came amiss to him; the most trivial and commonplace incident, when turned in his hand, acquired a polish

* *Hexe* is modern German for *witch*.

and a clearness of the first water. Over all, too, there was breathed an air of benignity and good-will to all men, which was no less striking than the eloquence and point of his narrations. The manner in which he spoke of his neighbours, and of distant persons of whose conduct he disapproved, was all in the same spirit. He did not cloak their faults—he spoke out manfully in contempt of what was wrong; but this was always accompanied by some kindly observation, some reservation in favour of the good they possessed, some natural and proper allowance. I say natural, because I should be giving a wrong impression of the character of his conversation, were I to let it be supposed that these excuses or extenuations were mawkishly uttered, or that he acted a part, and as a matter of rule said something in favour even of those he condemned. . . . . .

" He is loyal to the back-bone, to use a vulgar phrase; but with all this there is nothing servile or merely personal in his loyalty. When the King was coming to Edinburgh, and it was known he was to pass over Waterloo Bridge, a gentleman suggested to him the fitness of concealing or erasing the inscription respecting Prince Leopold * on the arch of the bridge, as it was known there was a coolness between the King and his son-in-law. ' What!' said

* Prince Leopold had been present at the opening of this bridge — and the inscription records that circumstance.

he, 'shall we insult the King's son-in-law, and through him the King himself, by any allusion to, or notice of, what is so unworthy of all parties? Shall we be ashamed of our own act, and without any diminution of our respect for those to whom the compliment was paid, draw back and eat our words because we have heard of a petty misunderstanding? Shall we undo that, which our respect for the King and his family alone prompted us, right or wrong, to do? No, sir! sooner than that inscription should be erased, or even covered with flags or flowers, as you propose, or that anything, in short, should be done to show that we were ashamed of our respect for Prince Leopold, or sought to save the King's feelings by a sacrifice of our own dignity, I would with my own hand set the town of Edinburgh on fire, and destroy it!' . . . . . .

"In the evening we had a great feast indeed. Sir Walter asked us if we had ever read Christabel, and upon some of us admitting with shame that we had never even seen it, he offered to read it, and took a chair in the midst of all the party in the library. He read the poem from end to end with a wonderful pathos and variety of expression—in some parts his voice was deep and sonorous, at others loud and animated, but all most carefully appropriate, and very sweetly modulated. In his hands, at all events, Christabel justified Lord Byron's often-quizzed cha-

racter of it — 'a wild and singularly original and beautiful poem.'

"Sir Walter also read us, with the utmost delight, or, as it is called, completely *con amòre*, the famous poem on Thomas the Rhymer's adventure with the Queen of the Fairies; but I am at a loss to say which was the most interesting, or even I will say poetical — his conversational account of it to us to-day on the very spot, Huntly-burn, or the highly characteristic ballad which he read to us in the evening.*

"Interspersed with these various readings were hundreds of stories, some quaint, some pathetical — some wild and fairylike, and not a few warlike, especially of the old times, and now and then one of Wellington and Waterloo; and sometimes he gave anecdotes of things close to his own doors, — ay, and incidents of this very day, which we had passed unseen, but which were now kindled into interest and importance, as if by the touch of a magician's wand.

"There was also much pleasing singing — many old ballads, and many pretending to be old ballads, were sung to the harp and pianoforte. The following is so exquisitely pathetic, that I copied it, after I went to my room, from the young ladies' book, and give it a place, though perhaps it is to be found somewhere in print: —

* See this ballad in the Border Minstrelsy, vol. iv

"My love he built me a bonnie bower," &c. &c. *

"Abbotsford, 31st December 1824.

"The fashion of keeping up old holidays by bonfires and merriment, is surely decreasing. Or is it that we, the recorders of these things, are getting older, and take consequently less interest in what no longer amuses us, so that we may be deceived in supposing the taste of our juniors to be altered, while in fact it is only our own dispositions and habits that are changed in complexion? It may be so—still I suspect that the progress of education, and the new habits of industry, and the more varied and generous objects which have been opened of late years to all classes, have tended greatly to banish those idle ceremonies and jovialities which I can just recollect in my childhood as being of doubtful pleasure, but which our ancestors describe as being near the summit of their enjoyments. Be this as it may in the eyes of others, I confess, for my part, that your Christmas and New-years' parties seem generally dull. There are several causes for this: The mere circumstance of being brought together for the express purpose of being merry, acts in opposition to the design in view; no one is pleased on compulsion; then it seldom happens that a party is quite well sorted; and a third reason is, that it will scarcely ever happen that a

* See "The Border Widow's Lament," in the Minstrelsy, vol. iii. pp. 94-7

family circle can be drawn together on two successive years, without betraying to the eye of affection some fatal blanks 'that were not there before.'

"I took notice at supper, as we waited for the moment that was to give birth to a new year, that there was more than one 'unquiet drooping of the eye;' and amidst the constrained hilarity of the hour I could trace a faltering in some voices, which told distinctly enough to an ear that was watching for it, that however present the smiling cheek and laughing eye might seem to be, the bleeding heart was far away.*

"It is true enough that it is to 'moralize too deeply' to take things in this way, and to conjure up with an ingenuity of self-annoyance these blighting images. So it is, and so I acted; and as *my* heart was light and unloaded with any care, I exerted myself to carry through the ponderous evening—ponderous only because it was one set apart to be light and gay. I danced reels like a wild man, snapped my fingers, and hallooed with the best of them, flirted with the young ladies at all hazards—and with the elder ones, of which there was a store, I talked and laughed finely. As a suite of rooms was open, various little knots were formed, and nothing would have been nicer had we been left alone, but we must needs be dancing, singing, playing, jesting, or some-

* The widow and daughters of the poet's brother, Mr Thomas Scott, were of the party.

thing or other different from that which we might be naturally disposed to be doing. Wherever the Great Unknown went, indeed, there was a sort of halo of fun and intelligence around him; but his plan of letting all things *bide* was not caught up somehow, and we were *shoved* about more than enough.

"Supper was over just at midnight, and as the clock was striking twelve, we all stood up, after drinking a hearty bumper to the old year, and having joined hands cross-wise, each with his right hand seizing his neighbour's left, all joined chorus in an appropriate song by Sir Adam Ferguson, a worthy knight, possessed of infinite drollery. Then followed other toasts of a loyal description, and then a song, a good red-hot Jacobite song *to the King**—a ditty which, a century ago, might have cost the company their heads, or at least their hands—but now it did no more than draw broad smiles of affected apprehension, and that roguish sort of look natural when people are innocently employed in doing what is held to be mischievous, but harms no one.

"Still, still it was ponderous. Not all the humour and miraculous vivacity and readiness of our host could save it—long blank pauses occurred—and then a feeble whisper—but little more, and the roar of a jolly toast subsided into a hollow calm. I dwell

* 'Here's to the King, boys,
Ye ken wha I mean, boys," &c. &c.
See Hogg's *Jacobite Relics.*

upon all this merely to make people consider how useless it is to get up such things now-a-days—for if Walter Scott, with all appliances and means to boot —in his noble house—surrounded by his own choice friends—full of health and all he can wish, is unable to exempt a Hogmanay party from the soporific effect proverbially attendant upon manufactured happiness, who else need venture on the experiment! At about one we broke up, and every one seemed rejoiced to be allowed to go about at pleasure: while the horses were putting to, to carry off our numerous company, and shawls were hunting for, people became bright again, and not being called upon to act any part, fell instantly into good-humour; and we had more laughing and true hilarity in the last half hour than in all the evening before. The Author of Waverley himself seemed to feel the reviving influence of freedom, and cruized about from group to group, firing in a shot occasionally to give spirit to what was going on, and then *hauling off* to engage with some other—to show his stores of old armour —his numerous old carved oak cabinets, filled with the strangest things—adder-stones of magical power —fairies' rings—pearls of price, and amongst the rest a mourning ring of poor Lord Byron's, securely stowed away in one of the inmost drawers!

"On one of those roving expeditions he pushed his head into the circle of which I happened to make one, and seizing upon some casual analogy, said,

'that reminds me of a story of a fair, fair lady,' &c. All became mute and crowded about him, and he began, in a low, solemn, and very impressive voice, with a sort of mock earnestness which fixed the attention in a wonderful degree, and gave an air of truth and importance to what he was telling, as if it were some material fact which he had to communicate for our serious consideration. 'There was,' said he, 'a very merry party collected in a town in France, and amongst all the gay lords and ladies there assembled, there was none who caused so great a sensation, as a beautiful young lady who danced, played, and sang in the most exquisite style. There were only two unaccountable circumstances belonging to her—one was, that she never went to church, or attended family prayers; the other, that she always wore a slender black velvet band or girdle round her waist. She was often asked about these peculiarities, but she always evaded the interrogatories, and still by her amiable manners and beauty won all hearts. One evening in a dance, her partner saw an opportunity of pulling the loop of her little black girdle behind; it fell to the ground, and immediately the lady became pale as a sheet—then gradually shrunk and shrunk—till at length nothing was to be seen in her place but a small heap of grey ashes!' . . . .

"I forgot to mention that in the course of a conversation about ghosts, fears in the dark, and such matters, Sir Walter mentioned having once arrived

at a country inn, when he was told there was no bed for him. 'No place to lie down at all?' said he. 'No,' said the people of the house—'none, except a room in which there is a corpse lying.' 'Well,' said he, 'did the person die of any contagious disorder?' 'Oh no—not at all,' said they. 'Well, then,' continued he, 'let me have the other bed.—So,' said Sir Walter, 'I laid me down, and never had a better night's sleep in my life.'

"Abbotsford, January 1, 1825.

"Yesterday being Hogmanay, there was a constant succession of *Guisards*—*i. e.* boys dressed up in fantastic caps, with their shirts over their jackets, and with wooden swords in their hands. These players acted a sort of scene before us, of which the hero was one Goloshin, who gets killed in a 'battle for love,' but is presently brought to life again by a doctor of the party.

"As may be imagined, the taste of our host is to keep up these old ceremonies. Thus, in the morning, yesterday, I observed crowds of boys and girls coming to the back door, where each one got a penny and an oaten-cake. No less than 70 pennies were thus distributed—and very happy the little bodies looked, with their well stored bags.

"People accustomed to the planting of trees are well aware how grateful the rising generations of the forest are to the hand which thins and prunes them.

And it makes one often melancholy to see what a destructive sort of waste and retardation goes on by the neglect of young woods — how much beauty is lost — how much wealth is wantonly thrown away, and what an air of sluttishness is given to scenery which, with a very little trouble, might have adorned and embellished, not to say enriched, many a great estate.

"I never saw this mischievous effect of indolence more conspicuously made manifest than in a part of the grounds here. Sir Walter's property on one side is bounded by a belt of fir trees, say twenty yards across. The 'march' runs directly along the centre of this belt, so that one-half of the trees belong to his neighbour, the other to him. The moment he came in possession he set about thinning and pruning the trees, and planting a number of hard-wood shoots under the shelter of the firs. In a very short time the effect was evident: the trees, heretofore choked up, had run into scraggy stems, and were sadly stunted in growth; but having now room to breathe and to take exercise, they have shot up in the course of a few years in a wonderful manner, and have set out branches on all sides, while their trunks have gradually lost the walking-stick or hop-pole aspect which they were forced to assume before, and the beeches and oaks and other recent trees are starting up vigorously under the genial influence of their owner's care. Meanwhile the obstinate, indo-

lent, or ignorant possessor of the other half of the belt, has done nothing to his woods for many years, and the growth is apparently at a stand in its original ugliness and uselessness. The trees are none of them above half the height of Sir Walter's, and few, if any, of half the diameter. So very remarkable is the difference, that without the most positive assurances I could not believe it possible that it could have been brought about by mere care in so short a period as five years. The trees on the one side are quite without value, either to make fences or to sell as supports to the coal-pits near Berwick, while Sir Walter already reaps a great profit from the mere thinning out of his plantations. To obtain such results, it will be easily understood that much personal attention is necessary, much method and knowledge of the subject. It happens, however, that in this very attention he finds his chief pleasure — he is a most exact and punctual man of business, and has made it his favourite study to acquire a thorough knowledge of the art.

"His excellent taste in planting has produced a very important effect. In laying out his plantations, he was guided, partly by a feeling that it was natural and beautiful to follow the 'lie of the ground,' as it is called, and partly by an idea that by leading his young wood along hollows and gentle slopes, he would be taking the surest course to give it shelter. But though he had only the prosperity and picturesque-

ness of the wood in view, he has also, he finds, added to the value of the adjoining fields that remain unplanted. The person who formerly rented one farm came to him and offered to take the unplanted part again, and to pay the same rent for it as he had paid originally for the whole, although one-half of it is now a young forest, and effectually enclosed. On Sir Walter's expressing his surprise at this, the man said that, both for growing corn and for the pasture of sheep, the land was infinitely improved in value by the protection which his rising woods and numerous enclosures afforded.

"This will seem still more remarkable when it is mentioned that, whenever circumstances permitted, his best land has been selected for planting trees. 'I have no patience,' he exclaimed, 'with those people who consider that a tree is not to be placed except on a soil where nothing else will grow. Why should the noblest of all vegetables be condemned to the worst soil? After all, it is the most productive policy to give trees every advantage, even in a pecuniary point of view, as I have just shown you. The immediate return in cash is not so great indeed as from wheat, but it is eventually as sure, if matters be properly attended to — and this is all over and above one's great and constantly increasing source of enjoyment in the picturesque beauty which rising woods afford."

"Abbotsford, January 2, 1825.

"At breakfast to-day we had, as usual, some 150 stories—God knows how they came in, but he is, in the matter of anecdote, what Hudibras was in figures of speech—'his mouth he could not ope—but out there flew a trope'—so with the Great Unknown, his mouth he cannot open without giving out something worth hearing—and all so simply, good-naturedly, and naturally! I quite forget all these stories but one:—'My cousin Watty Scott,' said he, 'was a midshipman some forty years ago in a ship at Portsmouth; he and two other companions had gone on shore, and had overstaid their leave, spent all their money, and run up an immense bill at a tavern on the Point—the ship made the signal for sailing, but their landlady said, "No, gentlemen—you shall not escape without paying your reckoning;"—and she accompanied her words by appropriate actions, and placed them under the tender keeping of a sufficient party of bailiffs. They felt that they were in a scrape, and petitioned very hard to be released; "No, no," said Mrs Quickly, "I must be satisfied one way or t'other: you must be well aware, gentlemen, that you will be totally ruined if you don't get on board in time." They made long faces, and confessed that it was but too true. "Well," said she, "I'll give you one chance—I am so circumstanced here that I cannot carry on my business as a single

woman, and I must contrive somehow to have a husband, or at all events I must be able to produce a marriage certificate; and therefore the only terms on which you shall all three have leave to go on board to-morrow morning is, that one of you consent to marry me. I don't care a d—— which it is, but, by all that's holy, one of you I will have, or else you all three go to jail, and your ship sails without you!" The virago was not to be pacified, and the poor youths, left to themselves, agreed after a time to draw lots, and it happened to fall on my cousin. No time was lost, and off they marched to church, and my poor relative was forthwith spliced. The bride, on returning, gave them a good substantial dinner and several bottles of wine a-piece, and having tumbled them into a wherry, sent them off. The ship sailed, and the young men religiously adhered to the oath of secrecy they had taken previous to drawing lots. The bride, I should have said, merely wanted to be married, and was the first to propose an eternal separation. Some months after, at Jamaica, a file of papers reached the midshipmen's berth, and Watty, who was observed to be looking over them carelessly, reading an account of a robbery and murder at Portsmouth, suddenly jumped up, in his ecstasy forgot his obligation of secrecy, and cried out "Thanks be to God, my wife is hanged!"'

"Mixed up with all this fun, Sir Walter has much admirable good sense, and makes many valuable re-

flections, which are apt sometimes to escape notice from the unpretending manner in which they are introduced. Talking of different professions to-day, and of the universal complaint of each one being overstocked, he observed — 'Ay, ay, it is the same in all; we wear our teeth out in the hard drudgery of the outset, and at length when we do get bread to eat — we complain that the crust is hard — so that in neither case are we satisfied.'

"Taking up a book with a pompous dedication to the King, he read the first paragraph, in which the style was inverted in such a manner as scarcely to be intelligible, but yet was so oddly turned as to excite curiosity. 'Now, this,' he said, 'is just like a man coming into a room bottom foremost in order to excite attention: he ought to be kicked for his pains.'

"Speaking of books and booksellers, he remarked, that, considered generally, an author might be satisfied if he got one-sixth part of the retail price of his book for his share of the profits; — this seems very moderate — but who should have such means of making a right calculation on such a point?

"Some conversation arose about stranger tourists, and I learned that Sir Walter had at length been very reluctantly obliged to put a stop to the inundation of these people, by sending an intimation to the inns at Melrose and Selkirk to stop them, by a message saying it was not convenient to receive company at Abbotsford, unless their visit had been previously

announced and accepted. Before this, the house used to be literally stormed: no less than *sixteen* parties, all uninvited, came in one day—and frequently eight or ten forced themselves in; so that it became impossible for the family to have a moment to themselves. The tourists roved about the house, touched and displaced the armour, and I daresay (though this was not admitted) many and many a set carried off some trophy with them.

"Just as breakfast was concluded to-day he said, 'Ladies and gentlemen, I shall read prayers at eleven, when I expect you all to attend.' He did not treat the subject as if ashamed of it, which some do. He did not say, 'those who please may come, and any one who likes may stay away,' as I have often heard. He read the Church of England service, and did it with singular beauty and impressiveness, varying his voice according to the subject; and as the first lesson was from a very poetical part of Isaiah, he kindled up, and read it with a great deal of animation, without, however, overstepping the solemnity of the occasion.

"We had an amusing instance of his playfulness this evening. Something introduced the subject of lions. 'Well,' said he, 'I think it amusing enough to be a lion: what think you, Captain Hall?' 'Oh,' I answered, 'I am always too much flattered by it—and nothing gratifies me more than being made to

wag my tail and roar in my small way.' 'That's right,' he said, turning to the company; 'nothing is more diverting than being handed about in that way, and for my part I enjoy it exceedingly. I was once hunted by a well-known lion-catcher, who I found was also in search of Miss O'Neill, and it so chanced that we met together at Highgate, or in that neighbourhood, and we were carried out to see some grounds, in the course of which both the lion and the lioness found themselves in a place where there was an iron railing all round. "Now," said I, "if you have got a lock there to turn upon us, you have us both for ever, and your fortune is made. You have only to hoist a flag on a pole at the top of the hill, and stick up a few bills, saying that you have just caught those two beautiful animals, and in an hour's time you have half the metropolis to see us at a shilling a-head, and we shall roar in grand style — shall we not, Miss O'Neill?"

"He then laughed much at some lions about town, who disdained being stirred up with a long pole, as every good lion ought to be. 'You and I, Captain Hall, know better, and we enjoy ourselves accordingly in our noble-beast capacity; — whereas those poor wretches lose all the good things we get — because, forsooth, they must be loved and admired, and made much of for their mere *human* qualities — while we are content with our pretensions as monsters!'

"Abbotsford, January 3.

"There has been an immense flood in the Tweed lately, which overflowed its banks, and did a world of mischief, though not quite so great as that at St Petersburgh. But what is comical, this rise of the river actually set Abbotsford on fire: at least the offices on the *haugh* below the house, where the water rose three feet perpendicular above the floor; and happening to encounter a pile of unslaked lime in the corner of a cow-house, presently set it in a blaze!.. There was no want of water, you may be sure—'too much of water, poor Ophelia'—and no great damage was done. This flood raised the water considerably more than a foot—exactly three inches higher than that of 1812, the highest ever known up to that date.

"A neighbouring laird and his son joined our party yesterday, Mr Henderson of Eildon Hall, and the proprietor of the well-known hills of that name. His history may amuse you. He was, long ago, clerk of the Cocket at Leith, an office worth £50 a-year, and this was his whole substance. It chanced that Mr Ramsay, the banker, was in want of a clerk, and said to a friend, 'Do you know any one who writes a good hand, is honest and steady, and who never opens his mouth from one year's end to the other?' 'I know your man exactly,' said the other; and Mr H. was accordingly made clerk under Mr

Ramsay, with whom he kept up the necessary communication by means of a sort of telegraph, as it is alleged, as Mr R. had a great dislike to speech. In process of time our hero insinuated himself so completely into the good graces of his patron, that he got a small share in the bank, then a larger, and so on. It happened about this time that the man who had taken Craigleith quarry failed for want of capital; and our friend, the silent clerk of the Cocket, who had the bank under his lee, bought up the contract, and cleared ten thousand a-year for nine or ten years by this one job. So that what with the bank, and sundry other speculations, which all turned out well, he amassed great wealth, and resolved to turn country gentleman.

"One day in company he was making enquiries about land, and a gentleman opposite was so eloquent in praise of Eildon Hall, then in the market, that he was seized with a desire to be the purchaser. 'What is the price?' asked he. 'Why,' said the other, 'I daresay you may get it for forty thousand pounds.' 'Indeed!' said our quarryman, 'I will give that with pleasure—and I authorise you to make the offer.'

"Now, the amusing thing about this transaction is, that the estate in question had been sometime advertised for sale for thirty-seven thousand pounds only; thus our worthy friend of the telegraph gave three thousand more for the property than was asked, to the great delight and astonishment of Messrs Todd

and Romanes, the agents for the sale. A fact, by the way, which goes far to support the Lord Chancellor's estimate of a banker's intellects.

"With all this, our taciturn friend makes 'a very decent lord,' is well esteemed in the neighbourhood, and, as he has the discretion now to take good advice, he is likely to do well.

"Sir Adam Fergusson, who is the most humorous man alive, and delights in showing up his neighbour, mentioned to him the other day that the Eildon estate was sadly in want of lime. 'Eh!' said the laird, 'I am much obliged to you for that hint—I am just ruined for want o' hints!'

"At this moment there is a project for making a railway from Berwick to Kelso, as all the world knows; but the Great Unknown and several other gentlemen are anxious to tail on a branch from Melrose to meet the great one; and as Mr H., with his long purse and his willingness to receive hints, is no bad card in the game, he has been brought up to Abbotsford for a week: his taciturnity has long ago fled, and he is now one of the most loquacious Borderers going. Torwoodlee, too, and his son the Skipper, came to breakfast to-day, in order that the whole party might have a consultation before going to the railroad meeting at Melrose. I should suspect that when the Author of Waverley sets his shoulders to any wheel, it must be in a devilish deep slough if it be not lifted out.

"As my brother James was obliged to return to Edinburgh, and I thought that I had staid long enough, we set out from Abbotsford after luncheon, very reluctantly, for the party had grown upon our esteem very much, and had lately been augmented by the arrival from England of Mr Lockhart, whom I wished to get acquainted with, and of Captain Scott, the poet's eldest son. The family urged me very much to stay, and I could only get away by making a promise to return for their little dance on Friday evening; so that it is not impossible this journal may have some additions made to it in the same strain."

"Abbotsford, 7th January 1825.

"To-day my sister Fanny and I came here. In the evening there was a dance in honour of Sir Walter Scott's eldest son, who had recently come from Sandhurst College, after having passed through some military examinations with great credit.

"We had a great clan of Scotts. There were no less than nine Scotts of Harden and ten of other families. There were others besides from the neighbourhood—at least half-a-dozen Fergussons, with the jolly Sir Adam at their head—Lady Fergusson, her niece Miss Jobson, the pretty heiress of Lochore—&c. &c. &c. . . . . .

"The evening passed very merrily, with much spirited dancing; and the supper was extremely cheerful, and quite superior to that of Hogmanay."

"Abbotsford, 8th January.

"It is wonderful how many people a house can be made to hold upon occasions such as this; and when, in the course of the morning, the neighbours came to stream off to their respective homes, one stared, like the man in the Arabian Nights who uncorked the genie, thinking how the deuce they ever got in. There were a few who stayed a while to saunter about the dressed grounds, under the guidance of Sir Walter; but by one or two o'clock my sister and I found ourselves the only guests left, and on the Great Unknown proposing a walk to a point in his plantations called Turn-again, we gladly accepted his offer and set out.

"I have never seen him in better spirits, and we accompanied him for several hours with great delight. I observed on this occasion the tone of his innumerable anecdotes was somewhat different from what it had been when James and I and some other gentlemen formed his companions. There was then an occasional roughness in the point and matter of the stories; but no trace of this to-day. He was no less humorous, however, and varied than before;—always appropriate, too—in harmony with the occasion, as it were—never lugging in stories by the

head and shoulders. It is very difficult, I may say impossible, to give a correct conception of this by mere description. So much consists in the manner and the actual tone and wording of what is said; so much, also, which cannot be imparted, in the surrounding circumstances—the state of the weather —the look of the country—the sound of the wind in the trees close at hand—the view of the distant hills:—all these and a thousand other things produce an effect on the minds of those present which suits them for the reception of the conversation at the moment, and prevents any transfer of the sentiments produced thereby, to any one differently circumstanced.

"On reaching the brow of the hill on the eastern side of one of his plantations, we came in sight of Melrose Abbey, on which there was a partial gleam of sunshine lighting up an angle of the ruins. Straightway we had an anecdote of Tom Purdie, his gamekeeper and *factotum*. Tom has been many years with Sir Walter, and being constantly in such company, has insensibly picked up some of the taste and feeling of a higher order. 'When I came here first,' said Tom to the factor's wife, 'I was little better than a beast, and knew nae mair than a cow what was pretty and what was ugly. I was cuif enough to think that the bonniest thing in a countryside was a corn-field enclosed in four stane dykes; but now I ken the difference. Look this way, Mrs

Laidlaw, and I'll show you what the gentlefolks likes. See ye there now the sun glinting on Melrose Abbey? It's no aw bright, nor its no aw shadows neither, but just a bit screed o' light—and a bit daud o' dark yonder like, and that's what they ca' picturesque; and, indeed, it maun be confessed it is unco bonnie to look at!'

" Sir Walter wished to have a road made through a straight belt of trees which had been planted before he purchased the property, but being obliged to return to Edinburgh, he entrusted it to Tom Purdie, his 'right-hand man.' 'Tom,' said he, 'you must not make this walk straight—neither must it be crooked.' 'Diel, Sir! than what maun it be like?' 'Why,' said his master, don't you remember when you were a shepherd, Tom, the way in which you dandered hame of an even? You never walked straight to your house, nor did you go much about; now make me just such a walk as you used to take yourself. Accordingly, '*Tom's walk*' is a standing proof of the skill and taste of the *ci-devant* shepherd, as well as of the happy power which his master possesses, in trifles as well as in great affairs, of imparting his ideas to those he wishes to influence. . . . . .

" In the course of our walk he entertained us much by an account of the origin of the beautiful song of 'Auld Robin Gray.' 'It was written,' he said, 'by Lady Anne Lindsay, now Lady Anne Bar

nard.* She happened to be at a house where she met Miss Suff Johnstone, a well known person, who played the air, and accompanied it by words of no great delicacy, whatever their antiquity might be;

* Lady Anne Barnard died in 1825, and in the same year Sir Walter Scott edited, for the Bannatyne Club, a tract containing a corrected version of the original ballad, and two continuations by the authoress. Part of the preface, which consists almost entirely of a letter from her to the editor, is as follows: —"*Robin Gray*, so called from its being the name of *the old herd* at Balcarras, was born soon after the close of the year 1771. My sister Margaret had married and accompanied her husband to London; I was melancholy, and endeavoured to amuse myself by attempting a few poetical trifles. There was an ancient Scotch melody, of which I was passionately fond; —— ——, who lived before your day, used to sing it to us at Balcarras. She did not object to its having improper words, though I did. I longed to sing old Sophy's air to different words, and give to its plaintive tones some little history of virtuous distress in humble life, such as might suit it. While attempting to effect this in my closet, I called to my little sister, now Lady Hardwicke, who was the only person near me, 'I have been writing a ballad, my dear; I am oppressing my heroine with many misfortunes. I have already sent her Jamie to sea, and broken her father's arm, and made her mother fall sick, and given her Auld Robin Gray for her lover; but I wish to load her with a fifth sorrow within the four lines, poor thing! Help me to one.'—'Steal the cow, sister Anne,' said the little Elizabeth. The cow was immediately *lifted* by me, and the song completed. At our fireside, and amongst our neighbours, 'Auld Robin Gray' was always called for. I was pleased in secret with the approbation it met with; but such was my *dread* of being suspected of writing *anything*, perceiving the shyness it created in those who could write *nothing*, that I carefully kept my own

and Lady Anne lamenting that no better words should belong to such a melody, immediately set to work and composed this very pathetic story. Truth, I am sorry to say, obliges me to add that it was a fiction. Robin Gray was her father's gardener, and the idea of the young lover going to sea, which would

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secret. * * * * * * * Meantime, little as this matter seems to have been worthy of a dispute, it afterwards became a party question between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries. 'Robin Gray' was either a very very ancient ballad, composed perhaps by David Rizzio, and a great curiosity — or a very very modern matter, and no curiosity at all. I was persecuted to avow whether I had written it or not, — where I had got it. Old Sophy kept my counsel, and I kept my own, in spite of the gratification of seeing a reward of twenty guineas offered in the newspapers to the person who should ascertain the point past a doubt, and the still more flattering circumstance of a visit from Mr Jerningham, secretary to the Antiquarian Society, who endeavoured to entrap the truth from me in a mannner I took amiss. Had he asked me the question obligingly, I should have told him the fact distinctly and confidentially. The annoyance, however, of this important ambassador from the antiquaries, was amply repaid to me by the noble exhibition of the 'Ballat of Auld Robin Gray's Courtship,' as performed by dancing-dogs under my window. It proved its popularity from the highest to the lowest, and gave me pleasure while I hugged myself in my obscurity."

The two versions of the second part of the ballad, written many years after the first part, are very inferior to it. In them, Auld Robin falls sick, — confesses that he himself stole the cow in order to force Jenny to marry him, — leaves to Jamie all his possessions, — dies, — and the young couple of course are united. — *Note by the Rev. Alexander Dyce*, 1839.

have been quite out of character here amongst the shepherds, was natural enough where she was then residing, on the coast of Fife. It was long unknown,' he added, 'who the author was; and indeed there was a clergyman on the coast whose conscience was so large that he took the burden of this matter upon himself, and pleaded guilty to the authorship. About two years ago I wrote to Lady Anne to know the truth—and she wrote back to say she was certainly the author, but wondered how I could have guessed it, as there was no person alive to whom she had told it. When I mentioned having heard it long ago from a common friend who was dead, she then recollected me, and wrote one of the kindest letters I ever received, saying she had till now not the smallest idea that I was the little *lame boy* she had known so many years before.'

"I give this anecdote partly from its own interest, and partly for the sake of introducing the unconcerned allusion to his own lameness—which I have heard him mention repeatedly, in the same sort of way, without seemingly caring about it. Once speaking of the old city wall of Edinburgh (which, by the way, he says was built during the panic caused by the disastrous battle of Flodden Field)—he said it used to be a great *ploy* in his youth to climb the said wall. 'I used often to do it,' he observed, 'notwithstanding my bad foot, which made it no very easy job.'

"On coming to a broad path in the middle of

the woods, we took notice of a finger-post, on which was written 'The *Rod* to Selkirk.' We made some remark about Tom's orthography, upon which he laughed, and said that that finger-post had gained him great popularity in the neighbourhood. 'I cannot say,' he remarked, 'that I had any such view when I ordered it to be put up. The public road, it is true, is not far off, and this leads through the very centre of my grounds, but I never could bring myself to make that a reason for excluding any person who finds it agreeable or advantageous to take over the hill if he likes. But although my practice in this respect had always been well known, the actual admission of it, the avowed establishment of it as a sort of right, by sticking up the finger-post, was received as a kind of boon, and I got a world of credit for a thing which had certainly not any popularity for its object. Nevertheless,' he continued, 'I have no scruple in saying that what I did, deserved the good people's acknowledgment; and I seriously disapprove of those proprietors who act on a different principle in these matters. Nothing on earth would induce me to put up boards threatening prosecution, or cautioning one's fellow-creatures to beware of man-traps and spring-guns. I hold that all such things are not only in the highest degree offensive and hurtful to the feelings of people whom it is every way important to conciliate, but that they are also quite inefficient—and I will venture to say,

that not one of my young trees has ever been cut, nor a fence trodden down, or any kind of damage done, in consequence of the free access which all the world has to my place. Round the house, of course, there is a set of walks set apart and kept private for the ladies—but over all the rest of my land any one may rove as he likes. I please myself with the reflection that many people of taste may be indulging their fancies in these grounds, and I often recollect how much of Burns's inspiration was probably due to his having near him the woods of Ballochmyle to ramble through at his will when he was a ragged callant.' *

" He told us of the different periods at which he had planted his grounds. ' I bought this property bit by bit,' he said, ' as accident threw the means of purchase into my hands: I could not lay it all out in a consistent plan, for when I first came here I merely bought a few acres and built a cottage, as a

* " Talking one day upon this subject, he told me that he had much more pleasure when the children from Darnick and Melrose would come up to him with a pocketful of nuts, pulled from his own trees, than to see them scampering off the instant they got a peep of him. He had the satisfaction to find, too, that instead of having his woods destroyed, like man-trap, spring-gun-men, and prosecutors in general, the trespassers seemed as careful as if they were their own. ' And as to the nuts,' he added, ' I can buy as many for half-a-crown as I could gather any year from the whole glen, however well watched and protected.' "—*Note by Mr Andrew Shortrede*, 1839.

kind of occasional retreat from the bustle of Edinburgh. By degrees I got another and another farm, till all you now see came to me. If things go on improving at the rate they do in the matter of travelling, I daresay I shall be able to live here all the year round, and come out every day from the Court. At present I pass about seven months of the year at Abbotsford, but if the projected railway is established, and we have steam-coaches upon it running at twenty miles an hour, it will be merely good exercise to go in to breakfast and come back to dinner.'

"In a hilly country such as this, one is more dependent upon the taste of one's neighbours than where the surface is flat, for the inequalities bring into view many distant points which one must constantly be wishing to see turned to advantage. Thus it is of consequence to be on such friendly terms with the neighbourhood, especially the proprietors on the opposite side of the river, that they may take one's comfort and pleasure into consideration when they come to plant, or otherwise to embellish their ground. Sir Walter pointed out several different plantations which had been made expressly with a view to the improvement of the prospect from Abbotsford. The owner of one of these estates came over to him one day to point out the line which he had traced with a plough, as the limit of a new plantation, and asked Sir Walter how he liked it, or if he wished any alteration to be made. The Author of Waverley thanked

him for his attention, and the two gentlemen climbed the hill above Abbotsford to take the matter into consideration. It was soon seen that, without extending the projected plantation, or diminishing its beauty with reference to the estate on which it was made, a new line might be drawn which would double its apparent magnitude, and greatly enhance the beauty of its form as seen from Abbotsford. The gentleman was delighted to have an opportunity of obliging the Great well-known Unknown, and cantered back to change the line. The young trees are already giving sufficient evidence of the good-taste of the proposer of the change, and, it may be said also, of his good sense and his good-nature, for unless he possessed both in an eminent degree, all his gigantic talents would be insufficient to bring round about him the ready hearts and hands of all within his reach. Scott of Gala, for instance, has, out of pure kindness planted, for a space of several miles, the whole of the opposite bank of the Tweed, and with great pains improved all the lines of his father's planting, solely to please his neighbour, and without any benefit to his own place. His worthy friend, also, of Eildon Hall, he told us to-day, had kindly undertaken, in the same spirit, to plant the base of these two beautiful hills, which, without diminishing their grandeur, will greatly add to their picturesque effect, and, in fact, increase the bold magnificence of their summits.

" ' I make not a rule to be on intimate terms,' he told us, ' with all my neighbours—that would be an an idle thing to do. Some are good—some not so good, and it would be foolish and ineffectual to treat all with the same cordiality; but to live in harmony with all is quite easy, and surely very pleasant. Some of them may be rough and *gruff* at first, but all men, if kindly used, come about at last, and by going on gently, and never being eager or noisy about what I want, and letting things glide on leisurely, I always find in the end that the object is gained on which I have set my heart, either by exchange or purchase, or by some sort of compromise by which both parties are obliged, and good-will begot if it did not exist before—strengthened if it did exist.'——

" ' There, see,' he continued, ' that farm there, at the foot of the hill, is occupied by a respectable enough tenant of mine; I told him I had a great desire for him to try the effect of lime on his land. He said he doubted its success, and could not venture to risk so much money as it would cost. ' Well,' said I, ' fair enough; but as I wish to have the experiment tried, you shall have the lime for the mere carting; you may send to the place where it is to be bought, and at the term-day you shall strike off the whole value of the lime from the rent due to me.' When the day came, my friend the farmer came with his whole rent, which he laid down on the table before me without deduction. ' How's this, my man?

you are to deduct for the lime, you know.' 'Why, Sir Walter,' replied he, 'my conscience will not let me impose on you so far—the lime you recommended me to try, and which but for your suggestion I never would have tried, has produced more than would have purchased the lime half-a-dozen times over, and I cannot think of making a deduction.'

"In this way, by a constant quiet interchange of good offices, he extends his great influence amongst all classes, high and low; and while in the morning, at breakfast-time, he gets a letter from the Duke of Wellington, along with some rare Spanish manuscripts taken at Vittoria*—at mid-day he is gossiping with a farmer's wife, or pruning his young trees cheek by jowl with Tam Purdie—at dinner he is keeping the table merry, over his admirable good cheer, with ten hundred good stories, or discussing railroads, blackfaced sheep, and other improvements, with Torwoodlee—in the evening he is setting the young folks to dance, or reading some fine old ballad from Percy's Reliques, or some black-letter tome of Border lore, or giving snatches of beautiful songs, or relating anecdotes of chivalry—and ever and anon coming down to modern home life with some good honest practical remark which sinks irresistibly into the minds of his audience,—and all with such ease and unaffected simplicity as never, perhaps, was seen

* About this time the Duke sent Scott some curious documents about the proposed duel between Charles V. and Francis I

before in any man so gifted—so qualified to take the loftiest, proudest line at the head of the literature, the taste, the imagination, of the whole world! Who can doubt that, after such a day as I have glanced at, his slumbers must be peaceful, and that remorse is a stranger to his bosom, and that all his renown, all his wealth, and the love of 'such troops of friends,' are trebly gratifying to him, and substantial, from their being purchased at no cost but that of truth and nature.

"Alas for poor Lord Byron, of whom he told us an anecdote to-day, by which it appeared that his immense fame as an author was altogether insufficient to harden him against the darts of calumny or malevolence levelled at his private life. He quoted, with the bitterest despair, to Scott the strong expression of Shakspeare,

> 'The gods are just, and of our pleasant vices
> Make instruments to scourge us;' *

and added, 'I would to God that I could have your peace of mind, Mr Scott; I would give all I have, all my fame, everything, to be able to speak on this subject' (that of domestic happiness) 'as you do!'

"Sir Walter describes Lord Byron as being a man of real goodness of heart, and the kindest and best feelings, miserably thrown away by his foolish contempt of public opinion. Instead of being warned

* *King Lear, Act V. Scene* 3.

or checked by public opposition, it roused him to go on in a worse strain, as if he said—'Ay, you don't like it—well, you shall have something worse for your pains.' Thus his Lordship, poor fellow, by taking the wrong view, went on from bad to worse, and at every struggle with the public sunk deeper and deeper in their esteem, while he himself became more and more sensitive about their disapprobation. 'Many, many a pleasant hour I have spent with him,' Sir Walter added, 'and I never met a man with nobler feelings, or one who, had he not unfortunately taken the wrong course, might have done more to make himself beloved and respected. A man of eminence in any line, and perhaps a man of great literary eminence especially, is exposed to a thousand eyes which men, not so celebrated, are safe from—and in consequence, right conduct is much more essential to his happiness than to those who are less watched; and I may add, that only by such conduct can the permanence of his real influence over any class be secured. I could not persuade Byron to see it in this light—the more's the pity, for he has had no justice done him.'

"Some one talked of the pains taken to provide the poor with receipts for making good dishes out of their ordinary messes. 'I dislike all such interference,' he said,—'all your domiciliary, kind, impertinent visits—they are all pretty much felt like insults, and do no manner of good: let people go

on in their own way, in God's name. How would you like to have a nobleman coming to you to teach you how to dish up your beefsteak into a French kickshaw? And who is there so miserably put to his ways and means that will endure to have another coming to teach him how to economize and keep his accounts? Let the poor alone in their domestic habits, I pray you; protect them and treat them kindly, of course, and trust them; but let them enjoy in quiet their dish of porridge, and their potatoes and herrings, or whatever it may be—but for any sake don't torment them with your fashionable soups. And take care,' he added, 'not to give them anything gratis; except when they are under the gripe of immediate *misery*—what *they* think misery —consider it as a sin to do anything that can tend to make them lose the precious feeling of independence. For my part, I very, very rarely give anything away. Now, for instance, this pile of branches which has been thinned out this morning, is placed here for sale for the poor people's fires, and I am perfectly certain they are more grateful to me for selling it at the price I do (which, you may be sure, is no great matter), than if I were to give them ten times the quantity for nothing. Every shilling collected in this and other similar manners, goes to a fund which pays the doctor for his attendance on them when they are sick; and this is my notion of charity.'

"I shall have given a false impression of this great man's character to those who do not know him, if I have left an impression that he is all goodness and forbearance — that there is no acid in his character; for I have heard him several times as sharp as need be when there was occasion. To-day, for instance, when a recent trial, in which a beautiful actress was concerned, happened to be brought into discussion, he gave his opinion of all the parties with great force and spirit; and when the lady's father's name was mentioned as having connived at his daughter's disgrace, he exclaimed—'Well, I do not know what I would not give to have one good kick at that infernal rascal—I would give it to him,' said he, drawing his chair back a foot from the table, 'I would give it to him in such a style as should send the vagabond out of that window as far as the Tweed. Only, God forgive me,' added he, smiling at his own unwonted impetuosity, and drawing his chair forward quietly to the table, 'only it would be too good a death for the villain; and besides,' said he, his good-humoured manner returning as he spoke, 'it would be a sad pollution to our bonny Tweed to have the drowning of such a thoroughbred miscreant as could sell his daughter's honour!'

"It is interesting to see how all ranks agree to respect our hero, and to treat him with respect at once, and with kindness and familiarity. On high

days and holidays, a large blue ensign, such as is worn by ships of war, is displayed at a flag-staff, rising from a round tower built for the purpose at one angle of his garden. The history of this flag is as follows:—

"The 'Old Shipping Smack Company' of Leith, some time ago launched one of the finest vessels they had ever sailed, and called her 'The Walter Scott,' in honour of their countryman. In return for this compliment he made the Captain a present of a set of flags; which flags you may be sure the noble commander was not shy of displaying to all the world. Now it so happens that there is a strict order forbidding all vessels, except King's ships, to hoist any other flag than a red ensign, so that when our gallant smack-skipper chanced to fall in with one of his Majesty's cruizers, he was ordered peremptorily to pull down his blue colours. This was so sore a humiliation, that he refused to obey, and conceiving that he could out-sail the frigate, crowded all sail, and tried to make off with his ensign still flying at his mast-head. The ship-of-war, however, was not to be so satisfied, and hinted as much by dropping a cannon-shot across his fore-foot. Down came the blue ensign, which was accordingly made prize of, and transmitted forthwith to the Lords of the Admiralty, as is usual in such cases of contumely Their Lordships, in merry mood, and perhaps even in the plentitude of their power feeling the respect

which was due to genius, sent the flag to Abbotsford, and wrote an official letter to Sir Walter, stating the case, and requesting him to have the goodness to give orders to his cruizers in future not to hoist colours appropriated exclusively to the ships of his Majesty. The transaction was creditable to all parties, and he, instead of taking offence,* as a blockhead in his place would have done, immediately sent for his masons, and built him a tower on which to erect his flag — and the first occasion on which it was displayed was the late return of his eldest son from England. . . . . .

" I have caught the fever of story-telling from contact with this Prince of all Story-tellers! During the riots for the immaculate Queen lately deceased, a report went abroad, it seems, that Abbotsford had been attacked by a mob, its windows broken, and the interior ransacked. ' Ay, ay,' said one of the neighbouring country people to whom the story was told, ' so there was a great slaughter of people?'—' Na, na,' said his informant, ' there was naebody killed.'— ' Weel, then,' said the other, ' depend upon it, it's aw a lee — if Abbotsford is taken by storm, and the

* I do not understand how any man could have taken offence under these circumstances. The First Lord of the Admiralty, Lord Melville, and the Secretary, Mr Croker, were both intimate friends of Sir Walter's — and all that passed was of course matter of pleasantry.

Shirra in it, ye'll hae afterwards to tak account o' the killed and wounded, I'se warrant ye!'"

"Abbotsford, January 9.

"We saw nothing of the chief till luncheon-time, between one and two, and then only for a few minutes. He had gone out to breakfast, and on his return seemed busy with writing. At dinner he was in great force, and pleasant it was to observe the difference which his powers of conversation undergo by the change from a large to a small party. On Friday, when we sat down twenty to dinner, it cost him an effort apparently to keep the ball up at table; but next day, when the company was reduced to his own family, with only two strangers (Fanny and I), he appeared delighted to be at home, and expanded with surprising animation, and poured forth his stores of knowledge and fun on all hands. I have never seen any person on more delightful terms with his family than he is. The best proof of this is the ease and confidence with which they all treat him, amounting quite to familiarity. Even the youngest of his nephews and nieces can joke with him, and seem at all times perfectly at ease in his presence—his coming into the room only increases the laugh, and never checks it—he either joins in what is going on, or passes. No one notices him any more than if he were one of themselves. These are things which cannot be got up—no skill can put people at

their ease, where the disposition does not sincerely co-operate.

"Very probably he has so correct a knowledge of human character in all its varieties, that he may assist by art in giving effect to this naturally kind bent of his disposition, and this he may do without ceasing to be perfectly natural. For instance, he never sits at any particular place at table—but takes his chance, and never goes, as a matter of course, to the top or to the bottom.* Perhaps this and other similar things are accidental, and done without reflection; but at all events, whether designed or not, their effect is to put every one as much at his ease as if a being of a superior order were not present.

"I know no one who takes more delight in the stories of others than he does, or who seems less desirous of occupying the ears of the company. It is true that no one topic can be touched upon, but straightway there flows out a current of appropriate story—and let the anecdote which any one else tells be ever so humorous, its only effect is to elicit from him another, or rather a dozen others, still more in point. Yet, as I am trying to describe this singular man to others who have not seen him, I should be leaving a wrong impression of his style in this respect, were I to omit mentioning that there is nothing

* This seems refining. Sir Walter, like any other gentleman of his standing, might be expected to devolve the labour of carving on one of his sons.

in the least like triumph on these occasions, or any apparent wish to excel the last speaker — the new key is struck, as it were, and instantly the instrument discourses most eloquent music — but the thing is done as if he could not help it; and how often is his story suggested by the obvious desire to get the man that has been speaking out of a scrape, either with some of the hearers, or perhaps with his own conscience. 'Are you a sportsman?' he asked me to-day. I said I was not — that I had begun too late in life, and that I did not find shooting in particular at all amusing. 'Well, neither do I,' he observed; 'time has been when I did shoot a good deal, but somehow I never very much liked it. I was never quite at ease when I had knocked down my blackcock, and going to pick him up, he cast back his dying eye with a look of reproach. I don't affect to be more squeamish than my neighbours, — but I am not ashamed to say, that no practice ever reconciled me fully to the cruelty of the affair. At all events, now that I can do as I like without fear of ridicule, I take more pleasure in seeing the birds fly past me unharmed. I don't carry this nicety, however, beyond my own person — as Walter there will take good occasion to testify to-morrow.'

"Appparently fearing that he had become a little too sentimental, he speedily diverted our thoughts by telling us of a friend of his, Mr Hastings Sands, who went out to shoot for the first time, and after firing

away for a whole morning without any success, at length brought down a bird close to the house, and ran up to catch his pheasant, as he supposed—but which, to his horror, he found was a pet parrot, belonging to one of the young ladies. It was flapping its painted plumage, now all dripping with blood—and ejaculating quickly, Pretty Poll! pretty Poll! as it expired at the feet of the luckless sportsman—who, between shame and regret, swore that, as it was his first experiment in shooting, it should be his last; and on the spot broke his gun all to pieces, and could never afterwards bear to hear a shot fired.

"But I am forgetting what I hinted at as a very characteristic turn of his good-nature. I had mentioned among other reasons why I was not very fond of shooting, that when I missed I was mortified at my want of skill, and that when I saw the bird lying dead at my feet it recalled to my mind a boyish piece of cruelty which I had been guilty of some five-and-twenty or thirty years ago, the recollection of which has been a source of frequent and bitter remorse. It is almost too bad to relate—suffice it that the nest was robbed, the young ones drowned before the mother's eyes, and then she was killed. 'You take it too deeply now,' he said; 'and yet an early circumstance of that kind, properly reflected upon, is calculated to have the best effect on our character throughout life. I too,' he continued, 'have my story of boyish cruelty, which has often given me the

bitterest remorse in my after life; but which I think has carried with it its useful lesson in practice. I saw a dog coming towards me, when I was a boy about the age you describe yourself to have been when you murdered the ox-eye family. What devil tempted me I know not, but I took up a large stone, threw it, and hit the dog. Nevertheless, it had still strength to crawl up to me, and lick my feet kindly, though its leg was broken—it was a poor bitch big with pup.'

"From parrots we got to *corbies*, or ravens, and he told us with infinite humour a story of a certain tame bird of this description, whose constant delight was to do mischief, and to plague all mankind and beastkind. 'A stranger,' he said, 'called one day with a very surly dog, whose habit it was to snarl and bite at every animal save man; and he was consequently the terror and hatred of his own fraternity, and of the whole race of cats, sheep, poultry, and so on. "Maitre Corbeau" seemed to discover the character of the stranger, and from the moment of his arrival determined to play him a trick. I watched him all the while, as I saw clearly that he had a *month's mind* for some mischief. He first hopped up familiarly to Cato, as if to say, "How d'ye do?" Cato snapped and growled like a bear. Corbie retired with a flutter, saying, "God bless me, what's the matter? I had no idea, my good sir, that I was offending you—I scarcely saw you, I was looking for a worm." By and by he made another studied sort

of approach—and when Cato growled he drew off, with an air as if he said, "What the devil is the matter with *you?*—I'm not meddling with you—let *me* alone." Presently the dog became less and less suspicious of Mr Corbie, and composed himself on the sunny gravel-walk in a fine sleep. Corbie watched his moment, and hopped and hopped quietly till close up, and then leaping on Cato's back, flapped his wings violently, gave one or two severe dabs with his bill, and then flew up to the edge of the cornice over the gateway, and laughed and screamed with joy at the impotent fury of the dog: a human being could not have laughed more naturally—and no man that ever existed could have enjoyed a mischievous joke more completely than our friend Corbie.' . . .

"10th January 1825.

"The party at Abbotsford breaks up this morning, to the sorrow, I believe, of every member of it. The loadstar of our attraction, accompanied by his sister-in-law, Mrs Thomas Scott, and her family, set off for Lord Dalhousie's—and all the others, except Lady Scott and her daughter, who are to follow in a day or two, are streaming off in different directions. Sir Walter seems as unwilling to leave the country, and return to the bustle of the city, as any schoolboy could have been to go back to his lessons after the holidays. No man perhaps enjoys the country more than he does, and he is said to return to it always

with the liveliest relish. It may be asked, if this be so, why he does not give up the town altogether? He might do so, and keep his Sheriffship; but his Clerkship is a thing of more consequence, and that he must lose; and what is far more important still, his constant transactions with the booksellers could never be carried on with convenience, were he permanently settled at a distance from them and their marts. His great purchases of land, his extensive plantations, the crowd of company which he entertains, and the splendid house he has just completed, are all severe pulls on his income — an income, it must be recollected, which is produced not from any fund, but by dint of labour, and from time to time. He is too prudent and sagacious a man not to live within his means; but as yet he cannot have laid by much, and he will have to write a good deal more before he can safely live where he pleases, and as he pleases.

"It becomes a curious question to know when it is that he actually writes these wonderful works which have fixed the attention of the world. Those who live with him, and see him always the idlest man of the company, are at a loss to discover when it is that he finds the means to compose his books. My attention was of course directed this way, and I confess I see no great difficulty about the matter. Even in the country here, where he comes professedly to be idle, I took notice that we never saw him till near ten

o'clock in the morning, and, besides this, there were always some odd hours in the day in which he was not to be seen.

"We are apt to wonder at the prodigious quantity which he writes, and to imagine the labour must be commensurate. But, in point of fact, the quantity of mere writing is not very great. It certainly is immense if the quality be taken into view; but if the mere amount of handwriting be considered, it is by no means large. Any clerk in an office would transcribe one of the Waverley Novels, from beginning to end, in a week or ten days—say a fortnight. It is well known, or at least generally, and I have reason to believe truly admitted, that Sir Walter composes his works just as fast as he can write—that the manual labour is all that it costs him, for his thoughts flow spontaneously. He never corrects the press, or if he does so at all, it is very slightly—and in general his works come before the public just as they are written. Now, such being the case, I really have no difficulty in supposing that a couple of hours every day before breakfast may be quite sufficient for all the MS. of Waverley Novels produced in the busiest year since the commencement of the series.

"Since writing the above I have taken the trouble to make a computation, which I think fair to give, whichever way it may be thought to make in the argument.

" In each page of Kenilworth there are, upon an average, 864 letters: in each page of this Journal 777 letters. Now I find that in ten days I have written 120 pages, which would make about 108 pages of Kenilworth; and as there are 320 pages in a volume, it would, at my rate of writing this Journal, cost about 29½ days for each volume, or say three months for the composition of the whole of that work. No mortal in Abbotsford-house ever learned that I kept a Journal. I was in company all day and all the evening till a late hour—apparently the least occupied of the party; and, I will venture to say, not absent from the drawing-room one quarter of the time that the Unknown was. I was always down to breakfast before any one else, and often three quarters of an hour before the Author of Kenilworth—always among the very last to go to bed—in short, I would have set the acutest observer at defiance to have discovered when I wrote this Journal—and yet it is written, honestly and fairly, day by day. I don't say it has cost me much labour; but it is surely not too much to suppose that its composition has cost me, an unpractised writer, as much study as Kenilworth has cost the glorious Unknown. I have not had the motive of £5500 to spur me on for my set of volumes; but if I had had such a bribe, in addition to the feelings of good-will for those at home, for whose sole perusal I write this; and if I had had in view, over and above, the literary glory of contri

buting to the happiness of two-thirds of the globe, do you think I would not have written ten times as much, and yet no one should have been able to discover when it was that I had put pen to paper?

"All this assumes Sir Walter Scott to be *the man*. If at a distance there still exist any doubt on the question, there seems to be no longer any in Edinburgh. The whole tenor of Sir Walter's behaviour on the occasion shows him to be the writer; and the single argument of a man of his candour and literary taste never speaking of, or praising works such as these, would alone be sufficient. It would be totally irreconcilable with every part of his character to suppose that he would for an instant take the credit of another's work—and this *silence* is equivalent to the claim.

"It may then be settled that he is certainly the author—but some may ask, why then does he affect any mystery about it? This is easily answered—it saves him completely from a world of flattery and trouble, which he sincerely detests. He never reads the criticisms on his books: this I know from the most unquestionable authority. 'Praise,' he says, 'gives him no pleasure—and censure annoys him.' He is fully satisfied to accept the intense avidity with which his novels are read—the enormous and continued sale of his works, as a sufficient commendation of them; and I can perfectly understand how the complete exemption from all idle flattery addressed

to himself personally is a great blessing. Be it remembered, that this favour would be bummed into his ears by every stupid wretch whom he met with, as well as by the polite and learned—he would be literally worried to death by praise, since not a blockhead would ever let him pass. As it is, he enjoys all the reputation he would have if his name were on the title-page, perhaps more; he enjoys all the profit—and he escapes all worry about the matter. There is, no doubt, some little bookselling trick in it too; but this is fair enough: his works are perhaps more talked of, and consequently more sold, than if the author were avowed—but the real cause of the mystery undoubtedly is his love of quiet, which he can thus indulge without the loss of one grain of literary fame or advantage of any description.

"To conclude—Sir Walter Scott really seems as great as a man as he is as an author; for he is altogether untouched by the applause of the whole civilized world. He is still as simple in his manners, as modest, unassuming, kind, and considerate, in his behaviour to all persons, as he was when the world were unaware of his enormous powers. If any man can be said to have a right to be presumptuous in consequence of possessing acknowledged talents far above those of his company, he is this man. But what sagacity and intimate knowledge of human nature does it not display, when a man thus gifted, and thus entitled as it were to assume a higher level,

undazzled by such unanimous praise, has steadiness of head enough not to be made giddy, and clearness enough of moral vision to discover, that so far from lessening the admiration which it is admitted he might claim if he pleased, he augments it infinitely by seeming to waive that right altogether! How wisely he acts by mixing familiarly with all men, drawing them in crowds around him, placing them at their ease within a near view of his excellence, and taking his chance of being more correctly seen, more thoroughly known, and having his merits more heartily acknowledged, than if, with a hundred times even his abilities, he were to trumpet them forth to the world, and to frighten off spectators to a distance by the brazen sound!

"It is, no doubt, in a great measure, to this facility of access, and engaging manner, that his immense popularity is due; but I should hold it very unfair to suppose that he proceeds upon any such calculation. It is far more reasonable to conclude that Providence, in giving him such astonishing powers of pleasing others, should also have gifted him with a heart to understand and value the delight of being beloved as well as wondered at and admired; and we may suppose that he now enjoys a higher pleasure from seeing the happiness which he has given birth to, both abroad in the world, and at home by his own fire-side, than any which his readers are conscious of. If a man does act well, it is an

idle criticism to investigate the motive with any view of taking exception to that. Those motives which induce to good results, must, in the long run, be good also. A man may be wicked, and yet on a special occasion act virtuously, with a view to deceive and gain under false colours some advantage which his own flag denies him; but this will not do to go on with. Thus it signifies nothing to say that Sir Walter Scott, knowing the envious nature of the world, and the pleasure it has in decrying high merit, and picking holes in the reputation of great men, deports himself as he does; in order to avoid the cavils of his inferiors. Where we find the success so great as in this case, we are quite safe in saying that it is not by rule and compass that the object is gained, but by genuine sentiment and right-mindedness — by the influence of those feelings which prompt men to take pleasure in good and kindly offices — by that judgment which sees through the mists of prejudice and error, finds *some* merit in every man, and makes allowances for the faults and weaknesses of all; — above all, by that admirable self-command which scarcely allows any unfavourable opinion to pass the lips, — the fruit of which is, that by concealing even from himself, as it were, every unkindly emotion, he ceases to feel it. His principle is, by every means to banish from his mind all angry feelings of every description, and thus to exempt himself both from the pain of disappointment in dis-

putes where he should fail, and from the pain of causing ill-will in cases where he might succeed. In this way he keeps on good terms with all his neighbours, without exception, and when others are disputing about boundaries and all the family of contiguous wrangling, he manages to be the universal friend. Instead of quarrelling with his eminent brother authors, whether poets or novelists (as so many others have done, and now do, to their mutual discomfort and shame), he is in friendly and thoroughly unenvious correspondence with them all. So far from any spark of jealousy being allowed to spring up, his delight is to discover and to foster, and make the most of genius wherever it exists. But the great trial is every-day life, and among every-day people: his house is filled with company all the year round, with persons of all ranks — from the highest down to the lowest class that is received at all in society; he is affable alike to them all, makes no effort at display on any occasion, is always gay and friendly, and puts every one at his ease; I consider all else as a trifle compared with the entire simplicity of his manners, and the total apparent unconsciousness of the distinction which is his due. This, indeed, cannot possibly be assumed, but must be the result of the most entire modesty of heart, if I may use such an expression, the purest and most genuine kindness of disposition, which forbids his drawing any comparison to the disadvantage of others. He has been for

many years the object of most acute and vigilant observation, and as far as my own opportunities have gone, I must agree with the general report—namely, that on no occasion has he ever betrayed the smallest symptom of vanity or affectation, or insinuated a thought bordering on presumption, or even on a consciousness of his own superiority in any respect whatsoever. Some of his oldest and most intimate friends assert, that he has even of late years become more simple and kindly than ever; that this attention to those about him, and absence of all apparent concern about himself, go on, if possible, increasing with his fame and fortune. Surely if Sir Walter Scott be not a happy man, which he seems truly to be, he deserves to be so!"

Thus terminates Captain Hall's Abbotsford Journal; and with his flourish of trumpets I must drop the curtain on a scene and period of unclouded prosperity and splendour. The muffled drum is in prospect.*

* This Chapter concluded the Fifth Volume of the first Edition of these Memoirs.—[1839.]

CHAPTER LXII.

Marriage of Lieutenant Walter Scott—Letter to Lady Davy—Project of Constable's Miscellany—Terry and the Adelphi Theatre—Publication of the Tales of the Crusaders—Preparations for the Life of Buonaparte—Letters to Mr Terry, Mrs Walter Scott, &c.—Description of Abbotsford in 1825.

1825.

With all his acuteness, Captain Basil Hall does not seem to have caught any suspicion of the real purpose and meaning of the ball for which he was invited back to Abbotsford on the 7th of January 1825. That evening was one of the very proudest and happiest in Scott's brilliant existence. Its festivities were held in honour of a young lady, whom the Captain names cursorily among the guests as "the pretty heiress of Lochore." It was known to not a few of the party, and I should have supposed it might have been surmised by the rest, that those halls

were displayed for the first time in all their splendour, on an occasion not less interesting to the Poet than the conclusion of a treaty of marriage between the heir of his name and fortunes, and the amiable niece of his friends, Sir Adam and Lady Fergusson. It was the first regular ball given at Abbotsford, and the last. Nay, though twelve years have elapsed, I believe nobody has ever danced under that roof since then. I myself never again saw the whole range of apartments thrown open for the reception of company except once—on the day of Sir Walter Scott's funeral.

The lady's fortune was a handsome one, and her guardians exerted the powers with which they were invested, by requiring that the marriage-contract should settle Abbotsford (with reservation of Sir Walter's own liferent) upon the affianced parties, in the same manner as Lochore. To this condition he gave a ready assent, and the moment he had signed the deed, he exclaimed—"I have now parted with my lands with more pleasure than I ever derived from the acquisition or possession of them; and if I be spared for ten years, I think I may promise to settle as much more again upon these young folks." It was well for himself and his children that his auguries, which failed so miserably as to the matter of worldly wealth, were destined to no disappointment as respected considerations of a higher description. I transcribe one of the letters by which he commu

nicated the happy event to the wide circle of friends, who were sure tc sympathize in his feelings of paternal satisfaction.

" *To the Lady Davy, Grosvenor Street, London.*

" Edinburgh, 24th January 1825.

" My Dear Lady Davy,

" As I know the kind interest which you take in your very sincere friend and Scotch cousin, I think you will like to hear that my eldest hope, who, not many years ago, was too bashful to accept your offered salute, and procured me the happiness of a kiss on his account, beside that which I always claim on my own, has, as he has grown older, learned a little better how such favours are to be estimated. In a word, Walter, then an awkward boy, has now turned out a smart young fellow, with good manners, and a fine figure, if a father may judge, standing well with the Horse-Guards, and much master of the scientific part of his profession, retaining at the same time much of the simple honesty of his original character, though now travelled, and acquainted with courts and camps. Some one of these good qualities, I know not which, or whether it were the united force of the whole, and particularly his proficiency in the attack of strong places, has acquired him the affection and hand of a very sweet and pretty Mrs Anne Page, who is here as yet known by the name

of Miss Jobson of Lochore, which she exchanges next week for that of Mrs Scott of Abbotsford. It would seem some old flirtation betwixt Walter and her had hung on both their minds, for at the conclusion of a Christmas party we learned the pretty heiress had determined to sing the old tune of—

> 'Mount and go—mount and make you ready,
> Mount and go, and be a soldier's lady.

Though her fortune be considerable, the favours of the public will enable me to make such settlements as her friends think very adequate. The only impediment has been the poor mother (a Highland lady of great worth and integrity), who could not brook parting with the sole object of her care and attention, to resign her to the vicissitudes of a military life, while I necessarily refused to let my son sink into a mere fox-hunting, muirfowl-shooting squire. She has at length been obliged to acquiesce rather than consent—her friends and counsellors being clear-sighted enough to see that her daughter's happiness could scarce be promoted by compelling the girl to break off a mutual attachment, and a match with a young lieutenant of hussars, sure of having a troop very soon, with a good estate in reversion, and as handsome a fellow as ever put his foot in a stirrup. So they succeeded in bringing matters to a bearing, although old Papa has practised the 'profane and unprofitable art of poem-making'—and the youngster

wears a pair of formidable mustachios. They are to be quiet at Abbotsford for a few days, and then they go to town to make their necessary purchases of carriage, and so forth; they are to be at my old friend Miss Dumergue's, and will scarcely see any one; but as I think you will like to call on my dear little Jane, I am sure she will see you, and I know you will be kind and indulgent to her. Here is a long letter when I only meant a line. I think they will be in London about the end of February, or beginning of March, and go from thence to Ireland, Walter's leave of absence being short. My kindest compliments to Sir Humphrey, and pray acquaint him of this change in our family, which opens to me another vista in the dark distance of futurity, which, unless the lady had what Sir Hugh Evans calls *good gifts*, could scarce otherwise have happened during my lifetime—at least without either imprudence on Walter's part, or restrictions of habits of hospitality and comfort on my own.—Always, dear Lady Davy, your affectionate and respectful friend and cousin,

WALTER SCOTT."

The marriage took place at Edinburgh on the 3d day of February, and when the young couple left Abbotsford two or three weeks afterwards, Sir Walter promised to visit them at their regimental quarters in Ireland in the course of the summer. Before he fulfilled that purpose he had the additional pleasure

of seeing his son gazetted as Captain in the King's Hussars—a step for which Sir Walter advanced the large sum of £3500. Some other incidents will be gathered from his letters to his son and daughter-in-law,—of which, however, I give such copious extracts chiefly for the illustration they afford of his truly paternal tenderness for the young lady who had just been admitted into his family—and which she, from the first hour of their connexion to the last, repaid by a filial love and devotedness that formed one of the sweetest drops in his cup of life.

"*To Mrs Walter Scott, Dublin.*

"Abbotsford, March 20, 1825.

"My Dearest Child,

"I had the great pleasure of receiving your kind and attentive letter from London a few days later than I ought to have done, because it was lying here while I was absent on a little excursion, of which I have to give a most interesting account. Believe me, my love, I am VERY grateful for the time you bestow on me, and that you cannot give so great happiness to any one as to me by saying you are well and happy. My daughters, who deserve all the affection a father can bestow, are both near me, and in safe guardianship, the one under the charge of a most affectionate husband, and the other under the eye of her parents. For my sons, I have taught

them, and what was more difficult, I have taught myself the philosophy, that for their own sake and their necessary advancement in life, their absences from my house must be long, and their visits short; and as they are both, I hope, able to conduct themselves wisely and honourably, I have learned to be contented to hope the best, without making myself or them uneasy by fruitless anxiety. But for YOU, my dear Jane, who have come among us with such generous and confiding affection, my stoicism must excuse me if I am more anxious than becomes either a philosopher or a hackneyed man of the world, who uses in common cases to take that world as it goes. I cannot help worrying myself with the question, whether the object of such constant and affectionate care may not feel less happy than I could wish her, in scenes which must be so new, and under privations which must be felt by you the more that your earlier life has been an entire stranger to them. I know Walter's care and affection will soften and avert these as much as possible, and if there be anything in the power of old papa to assist him in the matter, you will make him most happy by tasking that power to the utmost. I wrote to him yesterday that he might proceed in bargain for the troop, and send me the terms, that I might provide the needful, as mercantile folks call it, in time and place suitable. The rank of Captain gives, I am aware, a degree of consideration which is worth paying for; and what is

still more, my little Jane, as a Captain's lady, takes better accommodation every way than is given to a subaltern's. So we must get the troop by all means, *coute qui coute.*

" Now I will plague you with no more business; but give you an account of myself in the manner of Mr Jonathan Oldbuck, if ever you heard of such a person. You must suppose that you are busy with your work, and that I am telling you some long story or other, and that you now and then look round and say *eh*, as you do when you are startled by a question or an assertion — it is not quite *eh* either, but just a little quiet interjection, which shows you are attending. You see what a close observer papa is of his child.

" Well then, when, as I calculate (as a Yankee would say), you were tossing on the waves of the Irish Channel, I was also tossing on the Vadum Scotticum of Ptolemy, on my return from the celebrated *Urbs Orrea* of Tacitus. ' Eh,' says Jane; ' Lord, Walter, what can the old gentleman mean?' —' *Weiss nichts davon,*' says the hussar, taking his cigar from under his moustaches (no, I beg pardon, he does not take out the cigar, because, from the last advices, he has used none in his London journey.) He says *weiss nichts,* however, which is, in Italian, *No so* — in French, *Je ne'n scais rien* — in broad Scotch, *I neither ken nor care.*—Well, you ask Mr Edgeworth, or the chaplain of the regiment, or the

first scholar you come by—that is to say, you don't attempt to pronounce the hieroglyphical word, but you fold down the letter just at the place, show the talismanic *Urbs Orrea* and no more, and ask him in which corner of the earth Sir Walter can have been wandering? So, after a moment's recollection, he tells you that the great Roman general, Agricola, was strangely put to his trumps at the *Urbs Orrea* during his campaign in Caledonia, and that the ninth legion was surprised there by the British, and nearly destroyed; then he gets a county history and a Tacitus, and Sir Robert Sibbald's tracts, and begins to fish about, and finds at length that the *Urbs Orrea* is situated in the kingdom of Fife*—that it is now called Lochore—that it belonged to the Lochores—the De Vallences—the Wardlaws—the Malcolms—and Lord knows whom in succession—and then, in a sheet wet from the press, he finds it is now the property of a pretty and accomplished young lady, who, in an unthrift generosity, has given it—with a much more valuable present, namely, *her own self*—to a lieutenant of hussars. So there the scholar shuts his book, and observes, that as there are many cairns and tumuli and other memorials upon the scene of action, he wonders whether Sir Walter had not the curiosity to open some of them. 'Now heaven for

* According to the general creed—(out of the "Kingdom of Fife," that is to say)—Mr Oldbuck was quite wrong as to the identification of this *prætorium*

bid,' says Jane; 'I think the old knight has stock enough for boring one with his old Border ballads and battles, without raising the bones of men who have slept 1000 years quietly on my own estate to assist him.' Then I can keep silence no longer, but speak in my own proper person. 'Pray do you not bore me, Mrs Jane, and have not I a right to retaliate?'—'*Eh*,' says the lady of Lochore, 'how is it possible I should bore you, and so many hundred miles between us?'—'That's the very reason,' says the Laird of Abbotsford, 'for if you were near me, the thing would be impossible—but being, as you say, at so many hundred miles distant, I am always thinking about you, and asking myself an hundred questions which I cannot answer; for instance, I cannot go about my little improvements without teasing myself with thinking whether Jane would like the green-house larger or less—and whether Jane would like such line of walk, or such another —and whether that stile is not too high for Jane to step over.' 'Dear papa,' says Jane, '*your own style* is really too high for my comprehension.'

"Well then, I am the most indulgent papa in the world, and so you see I have turned over a new leaf. The plain sense of all this rambling stuff, which escapes from my pen as it would from my tongue, is that I have visited for a day, with Isaac Bayley,*

* A cousin of the young lady, and the legal manager of her affairs.

your dominions of Lochore, and was excellently entertained, and as happy as I could be where everything was putting me in mind that she was absent whom I could most have wished present. It felt, somehow, like an intrusion, and as if it was not quite right that I should be in Jane's house, while Jane herself was amongst strangers: this is the sort of false colouring which imagination gives to events and circumstances. Well, but I was much pleased with all I saw and particularly with the high order Mr Bayley has put everything into; and I climbed Bennarty like a wild goat, and scrambled through the old crags like a wild-cat, and pranced through your pastures like a wild-buck (fat enough to be in season though), and squattered through your drains like a wild-duck, and had nearly lost myself in your morasses like the ninth legion, and visited the old castle, which is *not* a *stupit place*, and in short, wandered from Dan to Beersheba, and tired myself as effectually in your dominions as I did you in mine upon a certain walk to the Rhymer's Glen. I had the offer of your pony, but the weather being too cold, I preferred walking. A cheerful little old gentleman, Mr Birrel, and Mr Greig the clergyman, dined with us, and your health was not forgotten.—On my retreat (Border fashion) I brought away your pony and the little chaise, believing that both will be better under Peter Mathieson's charge than at Lochore, in case of its being let to strangers. Don't you think Jane's pony will be taken care of?

"The day we arrived, the weather was gloomy and rainy—the climate sorrowful for your absence, I suppose; the next, a fine sunny frost; the third, when I came off, so checkered with hail showers as to prevent a visit I had meditated to two very interesting persons in the neighbourhood. 'The Chief Commissioner and Charles Adam, I suppose?'—'Not a bit; guess again.'—'O, Mr Beaton of Contal, or Mr Sym of Blair?'—'Not a bit; guess again.'—'I won't guess any more.'—Well then, it was two honest gentlemen hewn in stone—some of the old knights of Lochore, who were described to me as lying under your gallery in the kirk; but as I had no reason to expect a warm reception from them, I put off my visit till some more genial season.

"This puts me in mind of Warwick unvisited, and of my stupidity in not letting you know that the church is as well worth seeing as the castle, and you might have seen that, notwithstanding the badness of the morning. All the tombs of the mighty Beauchamps and Nevilles are to be seen there, in the most magnificent style of Gothic display, and in high preservation. However, this will be for another day, and you must comfort yourself that life has something still to show.

"I trust you will soon find yourself at Edgeworthstown, where I know you will be received with open arms, for Miss Edgeworth's kindness is equal to her distinguished talents.

"I am glad you like my old acquaintance, Mathews. Some day I will make him show his talent for your amusement in private; for I know him well. It is very odd, he is often subject to fits of deep melancholy.

"This is a letter of formidable length, but our bargain is, long or short, just as the humour chances to be, and you are never to mend a pen or think upon a sentence, but write whatever comes readiest. My love to Walter. I am rather anxious to know if he has got his horses well over, and whether all his luggage has come safe. I am glad you have got a carriage to your mind; it is the best economy to get a good one at once. Above all, I shall be anxious to hear how you like the society of the ladies of the 15th. I know my Jane's quiet prudence and good sense will save her from the risk of making sudden intimacies, and induce her to consider for a little while which of her new companions may suit her best; in the meanwhile being civil to all.

"You see that I make no apology for writing silly letters; and why should you think that I can think yours stupid? There is not a *stupit* bit about them, nor any word, or so much as a comma, that is not interesting to me. Lady Scott and Anne send their kindest love to you, and grateful compliments to Mrs Edgeworth, Miss Edgeworth, our friend Miss Harriet, and all the family at Edgeworthstown. *Buona notte, amata bene.* Good-night, darling, and

take good care of yourself. — I always remain your affectionate father, WALTER SCOTT.

" P. S. — They say a man's fortune depends on a wife's pleasure. I do not know how that may be; but I believe a lady's comfort depends much on her *fille-de-chambre*, and therefore beg to know how Rebecca discharges her office."

" *To Mrs Walter Scott, Edgeworthstown, Ireland.*

" Abbotsford, March 23, 1825.

" My Dearest Jane,

" I am afraid you will think me a merciless correspondent, assailing you with so close a fire of letters; but having a frank, I thought it as well to send you an epistle, though it can contain nothing more of interest excepting that we are all well. I can, however, add more particularly than formerly, that I learn from Mrs Bayley that Mrs Jobson's health is not only good, but her spirits are remarkably so, so as to give the greatest pleasure to all friends. I can see, I think, a very good reason for this; for, after the pain of the first separation from so dear an object, and after having brought her mind to believe that your present situation presented to you a fair chance for happiness, I can easily suppose that her maternal anxiety is greatly relieved from fears and apprehensions which formerly distressed her.

Nothing can be more kind and more handsome than the way in which Mrs Jobson speaks of Walter, which I mention, because it gives me sincere pleasure, and will, I am sure, afford the same to you, or rather much more.

"My troops here are sadly diminished. I have only Anne to parade for her morning walk, and to domineer over for going in thin slippers and silk stockings through dirty paths, and in lace veils through bushes and thorn brakes. I think Jane sometimes came in for a share of the lecture on these occasions. So I walk my solitary round—generally speaking—look after my labourers, and hear them regularly enquire, 'If I have heard from the Captain and his Leddy?' I wish I could answer them—*yes;* but have no reason to be impatient. This is the 23d, and I suppose Walter will be at Cork this evening to join the 15th, and that you are safe at Edgeworthstown to spend your first short term of widowhood. I hope the necessary hospitality to his mess will not occasion his dissipating too much; for, to be a very strong young man, I know no one with whom what is called hard living agrees so ill. A happy change in the manners of the times fortunately renders such abuse of the good creature, wine, much less frequent and less fashionable than it was in my days and Sir Adam's. Drinking is not now the vice of the times, whatever vices and follies they may have adopted in its stead.

"I had proceeded thus far in my valuable communication, when, lo! I was alarmed by the entrance of that terrific animal a two-legged boar — one of the largest size and most tremendous powers. By the way, I learned, from no less an authority than George Canning, what my own experience has since made good, that an efficient bore must always have something respectable about him, otherwise no one would permit him to exercise his occupation. He must be, for example, a very rich man (which, perhaps, gives the greatest privilege of all) — or he must be a man of rank and condition too important to be treated *sans ceremonie* — or a man of learning (often a dreadful bore) — or of talents undoubted, or of high pretensions to wisdom and experience — or a great traveller; — in short, he must have some tangible privilege to sanction his profession. Without something of this kind, one would treat a bore as you do a vagrant mendicant, and send him off to the workhouse if he presumed to annoy you. But when properly qualified, the bore is more like a beggar with a badge and pass from his parish, which entitles him to disturb you with his importunity, whether you will or no.* Now, my bore is a complete gentleman and an old friend, but, unhappily for those who know him, master of all Joe Miller's stories of sailors and Irishmen, and full of quotations from the classics as

* N.B.—At the time when this letter was written, Miss Edgeworth had not published her admirable *Essay on Bores.*

hackneyed as the post-horses of Melrose. There was no remedy; I must either stand his shot within doors, or turn out with him for a long walk, and, for the sake of elbow-room, I preferred the last. Imagine an old gentleman, who has been handsome, and has still that sort of pretension which leads him to wear tight pantaloons and a smart half-boot, neatly adapted to show off his leg; suppose him as upright and straight as a poker, if the poker's head had been, by some accident, bent to one side; add to this, that he is a dogged Whig; consider that I was writing to Jane, and desired not to be interrupted by much more entertaining society — Well, I was *had*, however — fairly caught — and out we sallied, to make the best we could of each other. I felt a sort of necessity to ask him to dinner; but the invitation, like Macbeth's *amen*, stuck in my throat. For the first hour he got the lead, and kept it; but opportunities always occur to an able general, if he knows how to make use of them. In an evil hour for him, and a happy one for me, he started the topic of our intended railroad; *there* I was a match for him, having had, on Tuesday last, a meeting with Harden, the two Torwoodlees, and the engineer, on this subject, so that I had at my finger-end every *cut*, every lift, every degree of elevation or depression, every pass in the country, and every possible means of crossing them. So I kept the whip-hand of him completely, and never permitted him to get off the

railway again to his own ground. In short, so thoroughly did I bore my bore, that he sickened and gave in, taking a short leave of me. Seeing him in full retreat, I *then* ventured to make the civil offer of a dinner. But the railroad had been breakfast, luncheon, dinner, and supper to boot — he hastily excused himself, and left me at double-quick time, sick of railroads, I daresay, for six months to come. But I must not forget that I am perhaps abusing the privilege I have to bore you, being that of your affectionate papa.

" How nicely we could manage without the said railroad, now the great hobby of our Teviotdale lairds, if we could by any process of conjuration waft to Abbotsford some of the coal and lime from Lochore — though if I were to wish for such impossibilities, would rather desire Prince Houssein's tapestry in the Arabian Nights to bring Walter and Jane to us now and then, than I would wish for ' Fife and all the lands about it.'*

" By the by, Jane, after all, though she looks so demure, is a very sly girl, and keeps her accomplishments to herself. You would not talk with me about planting and laying out ground; and yet, from what you had been doing at Lochore, I see what a pretty turn you have for these matters. I wish you were here to advise me about the little pond which we

* A song of Dr Blacklock's.

passed, where if you remember, there is a new cottage built. I intend to plant it with aquatic trees, willows, alders, poplars, and so forth—and put trouts and perches into the water—and have a preserve of wild-ducks on the pond, with Canadian geese and some other water-fowl. I am to get some eggs from Lord Traquair, of a curious species of half-reclaimed wild-ducks, which abound near his solitary old chateau, and nowhere else in Scotland that I know of; and I can get the Canadian geese, curious painted animals, that look as if they had flown out of a figured Chinese paper, from Mr Murray of Broughton. The foolish folks, when I was absent, chose to improve on my plan by making an island in the pond, which is exactly the size and shape of a Stilton cheese. It will be useful, however, for the fowl to breed in.

"Mamma drove out your pony and carriage today. She was (twenty years ago), the best *lady-whip* in Edinburgh, and was delighted to find that she retained her dexterity. I hope she will continue to exercise the rein and whip now and then, as her health is much improved by moderate exercise.

"Adieu, my dear Jane. Mamma and Anne join in the kindest love and best wishes. I please myself with the idea that I shall have heard you are well and happy long before this reaches you.—Believe me always your affectionate father,

WALTER SCOTT.

"I hope you will take my good example, and write without caring or thinking either what you have got to say, or in what words you say it."

"*To Walter Scott, Esq., &c. &c., Barracks, Cork.*

"Abbotsford, 4th April 1825.

"My Dear Children,

"I received your joint composition without a date, but which circumstances enabled me to fix it as written upon the 24th or 25th March. I am very sorry on Jane's account for the unpleasant necessity of night journeys, and the inconvenience of bad quarters. I almost wish you had stuck by your original plan of leaving Jane at Edgeworthstown. As for you, Mr Walter, I do not grudge your being obliged to pay a little deference to the wig and gown. *Cedant arma togæ* is a lesson well taught at an assize. But although you, thanks to the discipline of the most excellent of fathers, have been taught not to feel greatly the inconvenience of night journeys or bad lodgings, yet my poor Jane, who has not had these advantages, must, I fear, feel very uncomfortable; and I hope you will lay your plans so that she shall be exposed to them as little as possible. I like old songs, and I like to hear Jane sing them; but I would not like that she had cause to sing,

'Oh but I'm weary with wandering,
Oh but my fortunes are bad;
It sets not a gentle young lady
To follow a sodger lad.'

But against the recurrence of these inconveniences, I am sure Walter will provide as well as he can.—I hope you have delivered your introduction to Mrs Scott (of Harden's) friend in the neighbourhood of Cork. Good introductions should never be neglected, though numerous ones are rather a bore. A lady's society, especially when entering on life, should be, as they are said to choose their liquor, little but good; and Mrs Scott being really a woman of fashion—a character not quite so frequent in reality as aspired to—and being, besides, such an old friend of yours, is likely to introduce you to valuable and creditable society.

"We had a visit from Lockhart yesterday. He rode out on Saturday with a friend, and they dined here, remained Sunday, and left us this morning early. I feel obliged to him for going immediately to Mrs Jobson's when the explosion took place so near her, in my friend Colin Mackenzie's premises.* She had experienced no inconvenience but the immediate fright, for the shock was tremendous—and was rather proud of the substantial capacity of the

* This alludes to an explosion of gas in Shandwick Place, Edinburgh.

house, which had not a pane broken, when many of the adjoining tenements scarce had one left.

"We have had our share of casualties. Sibyl came down with me, but without any injury; but Tom Purdie being sent on some business by Mr Laidlaw, she fell with him, and rolled over him, and bruised him very much. This is rather too bad, so I shall be on the *pavé* for a pony, my neck being rather precious.

"Touching Colonel Thwackwell,* of whom I know nothing but the name, which would bespeak him a strict disciplinarian, I suppose you are now arrived at that time of life you can take your ground from your observation, without being influenced by the sort of cabal which often exists in our army, especially in the corps where the officers are men of fortunes or expectations, against a commanding officer. The execution of their duty is not *always* popular with young men, who may like the dress and show of a regimental officer; and it often happens that a little pettishness on the one side begets a little repulsiveness of manner on the other, so that it becomes the question how the one shall command, and the other obey, in the way most disagreeable to the other, without a tangible infringement of rules. This is the shame of our army, and in a greater degree that of our navy. A humble and reflecting

* Sir Walter had misread, or chose to miswrite, the name of his son's new commandant, Lieutenant-Colonel *Thackwell.*

man keeps as much aloof as possible from such feuds. You have seen the world more than when you joined the 18th.

"The Catholic question seems likely to be carried at last. I hope, though I doubt it a little, that Ireland will be the quieter, and the people more happy. I suspect, however, that it is laying a plaster to the foot while the head aches, and that the fault is in the landholder's extreme exactions, not in the disabilities of the Catholics, or any more remote cause.

"My dear Jane, pray take care of yourself, and write me soon how you are and what you are doing. I hope it will contain a more pleasant account of your travels than the last. Mamma and Anne send best loves. I hope my various letters have all come to your hand, and am, my dear children, always your affectionate father, WALTER SCOTT."

"*To Walter Scott, Esq., Lieutenant 15th Hussars, Dublin.*

"Abbotsford, 27th April 1825.

"My Dear Walter,

"I received to-day your interesting communication, and have written to Edinburgh to remit the price of this troop as soon as possible. I can make this out without troubling Mr Bayley; but it will pare my nails short for the summer, and I fear prevent my paying your carriage, as I had intended

"Nicol is certainly going to sell Faldonside.* The Nabal asks £40,000—at least £5000 too much. Yet in the present low rate of money, and general thirst for land, there is no saying but he may get a fool to offer him his price or near it. I should like to know your views about this matter, as it is more your concern than mine, since you will, I hope, have a much longer date of it. I think I could work it all off during my life, and also improve the estate highly; but then it is always a heavy burden, and I would not like to undertake it, unless I was sure that Jane and you desired such an augmentation of territory. I do not mean to do anything hasty, but, as an opportunity may cast up sudddenly, I should like to know your mind.

"I conclude, this being 27th April, that you are all snugly settled in Dublin. I am a little afraid of the gaieties for Jane, and hope she will be gay moderately, that she may be gay long. The frequent habit of late hours is always detrimental to health, and sometimes has consequences which last for life. *Avis au lecteur;* of course I do not expect you to shut yourselves up at your period of life. Your course of gaiety at Cork reminds me of Jack Johnstone's song,

'Then we'll visit the Callaghans, Brallaghans,
Nowlans, and Dowlans likewise,
And bother them all with the beauty
Which streams from my Judy's (or Jeanie's) black eyes.'

* See *ante*, Vol. VI. p. 127.

"We have better accounts of little Johnnie of late — his cough is over for the present, and the learned cannot settle whether it has been the hooping-cough or no. Sophia talks of taking him to Germiston. Lockhart comes here for the Circuit, and I expect him to-morrow.

"Sir Adam and Lady Fergusson bring most excellent accounts of Mrs Jobson's good health and spirits. Sir Henry Jardine (he writes himself no less now) hath had the dignity of knighthood inflicted on him. Mamma and Anne join in kind love. I expect a long letter from Jane one of these days soon; she writes too well not to write with ease to herself, and therefore I am resolved her talent shall not be idle, if a little jogging can prevail on her to exercise it.

"You have never said a word of your horses, nor how you have come on with your domestics, those necessary plagues of our life. Two or three days since, that cub of Sir Adam's chose to amuse himself with flinging crackers about the hall here when we were at dinner. I think I gave him a proper jobation.

"Here is the first wet day we have had — very welcome, as the earth required it much, and the season was backward. I can hear Bogie whistling for joy. — Your affectionate father,

WALTER SCOTT."

In May 1825, Sir Walter's friend Terry, and his

able brother comedian, Mr Frederick Yates, entered on a negotiation, which terminated, in July, in their becoming joint lessees and managers of the Adelphi Theatre, London. Terry requested Scott and Ballantyne to assist him on this occasion by some advance of money, or if that should be inconvenient, by the use of their credit. They were both very anxious to serve him; but Sir Walter had a poor opinion of speculations in theatrical property, and, moreover, entertained suspicions, too well justified by the result, that Terry was not much qualified for conducting the pecuniary part of such a business. Ultimately Ballantyne, who shared these scruples, became Terry's security for a considerable sum (I think £500), and Sir Walter pledged his credit in like manner to the extent of £1250. He had, in the sequel, to pay off both this sum and that for which Ballantyne had engaged.

Several letters were interchanged before Terry received the support he had requested from his Scotch friends; and I must extract two of Sir Walter's.—The first is, in my opinion, when considered with reference to the time at which it was written, and the then near though unforeseen result of the writer's own commercial speculations, as remarkable a document as was ever penned. It is, moreover, full of shrewd and curious suggestions touching theatrical affairs in general—from the highest to the lowest. The second is, at least, a specimen of friendly cau-

tion and delicate advice most inimitably characteristic of Scott.

"*To Daniel Terry, Esq., London.*

"Edinburgh, May 5th, 1825.

"My Dear Terry,

"I received your long confidential letter; and as the matter is in every respect important, I have given it my anxious consideration. 'The plot is a good plot, and the friends, though I know them only by your report, are, I doubt not, good friends, and full of expectation.'* There are, however, two particulars unfavourable to all theatrical speculations, and of which you are probably better aware than I am. The first is, that every scheme depending on public caprice must be irregular in its returns. I remember John Kemble, complaining to me of Harry Siddons' anxious and hypochondriac fears about his Edinburgh concern, said, 'He does not consider that no theatre whatever can be considered as a regular source of income, but must be viewed as a lottery, at one time strikingly successful, at another a total failure.' Now this affects your scheme in two ways. First, you can hardly expect, I fear, your returns to be so regular every season, even though your calculation be just as to the recent average. And, secondly, you must secure some fund, either of money or credit, to meet those blanks and bad seasons which must

* Hotspur, 1*st King Henry IV. Act II. Scene* 3.

occasionally occur. The best business is ruined when it becomes pinched for money, and gets into the circle of discounting bills, and buying necessary articles at high prices and of inferior quality, for the sake of long credit. I own your plan would have appeared to me more solid, though less splendid, if Mr Jones, or any other monied man, had retained one-half or one-third of the adventure; for every speculation requires a certain command of money, and cannot be conducted with any plausibility upon credit alone. It is easy to make it feasible on paper, but the times of payment arrive to a certainty. Those of supply are less certain, and cannot be made to meet the demands with the same accuracy. A month's difference between demand and receipt makes loss of credit; loss of credit is in such a case ruin. I would advise you and Mr Yates to consider this, and sacrifice some view of profit to obtain stability by the assistance of some monied man—a class of whom many are in your great city just gaping for such an opportunity to lay out cash to advantage.

"This difficulty—the want of solid cash—is an obstacle to all attempts whatsoever; but there is something, it would seem, peculiarly difficult in managing a theatre. All who practise the fine arts in any department are, from the very temperament necessary to success, more irritable, jealous, and capricious, than other men made up of heavier elements; but the jealousy among players is signally active,

because their very persons are brought into direct comparison, and from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot they are pitted by the public in express rivalry against each other. Besides, greatly as the profession has risen in character of late years, theatrical talent must still be found frequently allied with imperfect general education, low habits, and sometimes the follies and vices which arise out of them. All this makes, I should think, a theatre very difficult to manage, and liable to sudden checks when your cattle *jibb*, or do not work kindly. I think you have much of the talent to manage this; and bating a little indolence, which you can always conquer when you have a mind and a motive, I know no one whose taste, temper, and good sense, make him more likely to gain and secure the necessary influence over the performers. But *il faut de l'argent* — you must be careful in your situation, that a check shall not throw you on the breakers, and for this there is no remedy but a handsome provision of the blunt. This is the second particular, I think, unfavourable to undertakings of a theatrical description, and against which I would wish to see you guarded by a more ample fund than your plan involves.

"You have of course ascertained from the books of the theatre that the returns of receipts are correct; but I see no provision made for wear and tear of stock, expense of getting up new pieces, &c

which, in such an undertaking, must be considerable. Perhaps it is included in the charge of £36 per night; but if not, it seems to me that it will materially alter your calculations for the worse, for you are naturally disposed to be liberal in such expenses, and the public will expect it. Without baits the fish cannot be caught. I do not state these particulars from any wish to avoid assisting you in this undertaking; much the contrary. If I saw the prospect of your getting fairly on the wing, nothing could give me more pleasure than to assist to the extent of my means, and I shall only, in that case, regret that they are at present more limited than I could wish, by circumstances which I will presently tell you. But I should not like to see you take flight, like the ingenious mechanist in Rasselas—only to flutter a few yards, and fall into the lake. This would be a most heart-breaking business, and would hang like a millstone about your neck for all your life. Capital and talent will do excellent things together; but depend on it, talent without capital will no more carry on an extensive and progressive undertaking of this nature, than a racehorse will draw a Newcastle waggon. Now, I cannot at present assist you with ready money, which is the great object in your undertaking. This year has been, owing to many reasons, the heaviest of my expenditure, and the least fruitful of profit, because various anxieties attending Walter's marriage, and feasting, &c., after

it, have kept me from my usual lucrative labours. It has no doubt been a most advantageous concern, for he has got an amiable girl, whom he loves, and who is warmly attached to him, with a very considerable fortune. But I have had to find cash for the purchase of a troop for him—about £3500: *item*, the bride's jewels, and so forth, becoming her situation and fortune, £500: *item*, for a remount to him on joining his regiment, equipage for quarters, carriage, and other things, that they may enter life with a free income, £1000 at least. Moreover, I am a sharer to the extent of £1500 on a railroad, which will bring coals and lime here at half price, and double the rent of the arable part of my property, but is dead outlay in the meantime; and I have shares in the oil-gas, and other promising concerns, not having resisted the mania of the day, though I have yielded to it but soberly; also, I have the dregs of Abbotsford House to pay for—and all besides my usual considerable expenditure; so I must look for some months to be put to every corner of my saddle. I could not let my son marry her like a beggar; but, in the meantime, I am like my namesake in the days of the crusades—Walter the Penniless.

"Every one grumbles at his own profession, but here is the devil of a calling for you, where a man pays £3000 for an annuity of £400 a-year and less—renounces his free-will in almost every respect—must rise at five every morning to see horses curried

—dare not sleep out of a particular town without the leave of a cross colonel, who is often disposed to refuse it merely because he has the power to do so; and, last of all, may be sent to the most unhealthy climates to die of the rot, or be shot like a black-cock. There is a per contra, to be sure—fine clothes and fame; but the first must be paid for, and the other is not come by, by one out of the hundred. I shall be anxious to know what you are able to do. Your ready is the devil—

> 'The thing may to-morrow be all in your power,
> But the money, gadzooks, must be paid in an hour.'

If you were once set a-rolling, time would come round with me, and then I should be able to help you a little more than at present. Meanwhile, I am willing to help you with my credit by becoming one of your guarantees to the extent of £1250.

"But what I am most anxious about is to know how you raise the £5000 cash: if by bills and discounts, I beg to say I must decline having to do with the business at all; for besides the immense expense of renewals, that mode of raising money is always liable to some sudden check, which throws you on your back at once, and I should then have hurt myself and deprived myself of the means of helping you some other way. If you can get such a sum in loan for a term of years certain, that would do well. Still better, I think, could you get a monied

partner in the concern to pay the sum down, and hold some £2000 more ready for current expenses. I wish to know whether in the £36 for nightly expenses you include your own salary, within which you would probably think it prudent to restrain your own expenses, at least for a year or two; for, believing as I do, that your calculation of £70 per night (five per cent. on the outlay) is rather sanguine, I would like to know that your own and Mr Yates's expenses were provided for, so as to leave the receipts, whatever they may be, free to answer the burdens. If they do so, you will have great reason to be contented. I need not add that Theodore Hook's assistance will be *impayable*. On the whole, my apprehension is for want of money in the outset. Should you either start with marked success, or have friends sufficient to carry on at some disadvantage for a season or two, I should have little fear; but great attention and regularity will be necessary. You are no great accountant yourself, any more than I am, but I trust Mr Yates is. All rests with prudence and management. Murray is making a fortune for his sister and family on the very bargain which Siddons, poor fellow, could not have sustained for two years longer. If I have seemed more cautious in this matter than you might expect from my sincere regard for you, it is because caution is as necessary for you as myself; and I assure you I think as deeply on your account as on my own. I beg kind compli-

ments to Mrs Terry, and inclose a lock of my gray hair, which Jane desired me to send you for some brooch or clasp at Hamlet's.—Ever yours, very truly,

WALTER SCOTT."

" *To the Same.*

" My Dear Terry,

" You have long ere this heard from honest James that he accedes to your proposal of becoming one of your sureties. I did not think it right in the first instance either to encourage or deter him from taking this step, but sent him the whole correspondence upon the subject, that he might judge for himself, and I fancy he concluded that his own risk of loss was not by any means in proportion to your fair prospect of advantage.

" There is an idea among some of your acquaintance, which I partly acquiesce in, that you are in general somewhat of a procrastinator. I believe I have noticed the same thing myself; but then I consider it the habit of one accustomed to alternations of severe exertion and great indolence; and I have no doubt that it will give place to the neccesity of following out a regular, stated, and daily business —where every hour brings its own peculiar duties, and you feel yourself, like the mail-coach, compelled to be *in to time.* I know such routine always cures me of the habit of indolence, which on other occa-

sions I give way to as much as any man. This objection to the success which all agree is in your own power, I have heard coupled with another, which is also founded on close observation of your character, and connected with an excellent point of it; it is, that you will be too desirous to do things perfectly well, to consider the *petite economie* necessary to a very extensive undertaking. This, however, is easily guarded against. I remember Mrs John Kemble telling me how much she had saved by degrading some unfortunate figurantes into paper veils and ruffles. I think it was a round sum, and without going such lengths, I fear severer economy than one would like to practise is essential to making a theatre profitable. Now, I have mentioned the only two personal circumstances which induce envy to lift her voice against your prospects. I think it right you should know them, for there is something to be considered in both particulars; I would not mention them till the affair was finished, because I would not have you think I was sheltering myself under such apologies. That the perils rising out of them are not formidable in my eyes, I have sufficiently shown; and I think it right to mention them now. I know I need not apologize for my frankness, nor will you regard it either as an undue exercise of the privilege of an adviser, or an abuse of the circumstances in which this matter has placed us.—Yours ever, with best love to Mrs Terry and Watt, W. Scott."

While this business of Terry's was under consideration, Scott asked me to go out with him one Saturday to Abbotsford, to meet Constable and James Ballantyne, who were to be there for a quiet consultation on some projects of great importance. I had shortly before assisted at a minor conclave held at Constable's villa of Polton, and was not surprised that Sir Walter should have considered his publisher's new plans worthy of very ample deliberation. He now opened them in more fulness of detail, and explained his views in a manner that might well excite admiration, not unmixed with alarm. Constable was meditating nothing less than a total revolution in the art and traffic of bookselling; and the exulting and blazing fancy with which he expanded and embellished his visions of success, hitherto undreamt of in the philosophy of the trade, might almost have induced serious suspicions of his sanity, but for the curious accumulation of pregnant facts on which he rested his justification, and the dexterous sagacity with which he uncoiled his practical inferences. He startled us at the outset by saying, "Literary genius may, or may not, have done its best; but printing and bookselling, as instruments for enlightening and entertaining mankind, and, of course, for making money, are as yet in mere infancy. Yes, the trade are in their cradle." Scott eyed the florid bookseller's beaming countenance, and the solemn stare with which the equally portly printer was listening, and

pushing round the bottles with a hearty chuckle, bade me "Give our twa *sonsie babbies* a drap mother's milk." Constable sucked in fresh inspiration, and proceeded to say that, wild as we might think him, his new plans had been suggested by, and were in fact mainly grounded upon, a sufficiently prosaic authority — namely, the annual schedule of assessed taxes, a copy of which interesting document he drew from his pocket, and substituted for his *D'Oyley*. It was copiously diversified, "text and margent," by figures and calculations in his own handwriting, which I for one might have regarded with less reverence, had I known at the time this "great arithmetician's" rooted aversion and contempt for all examination of his own balance-sheet. His lecture on these columns and ciphers was, however, as profound as ingenious. He had taken vast pains to fill in the number of persons who might fairly be supposed to pay the taxes for each separate article of luxury; and his conclusion was, that the immense majority of British families, endowed with liberal fortunes, had never yet conceived the remotest idea that their domestic arrangements were incomplete, unless they expended some considerable sum annually upon the purchase of books. "Take," said he "this one absurd and contemptible *item* of the tax on hair-powder; the use of it is almost entirely gone out of fashion. Bating a few parsons' and lawyers' wigs, it may be said that hair-powder is confined to the

flunkeys, and indeed to the livery servants of great and splendid houses exclusively; nay, in many even of these, it is already quite laid aside. Nevertheless, for each head that is thus vilified in Great Britain, a guinea is paid yearly to the Exchequer; and the taxes in that schedule are an army, compared to the purchasers of even the best and most popular of books." He went on in the same vein about armorial bearings, hunters, racers, and four-wheeled carriages; and having demonstrated that hundreds of thousands in this magnificent country held, as necessary to their personal comfort, and the maintenance of decent station, articles upon articles of costly elegance, of which their forefathers never dreamt, said that on the whole, however usual it was to talk of the extended scale of literary transactions in modern days, our self-love never deceived us more grossly than when we fancied our notions as to the matter of books had advanced in at all a corresponding proportion. "On the contrary," cried Constable, "I am satisfied that the demand for Shakspeare's plays, contemptible as we hold it to have been, in the time of Elizabeth and James, was more creditable to the classes who really indulged in any sort of elegance then, than the sale of Childe Harold or Waverley, triumphantly as people talk, is to the alleged expansion of taste and intelligence in this nineteenth century."

Scott helped him on by interposing, that at that moment he had a rich valley crowded with hand-

some houses under his view, and yet much doubted whether any laird within ten miles spent ten pounds per annum on the literature of the day — which he, of course, distinguished from its periodical press. "No," said Constable, "there is no market among them that's worth one's thinking about. They are contented with a review or a magazine, or at best with a paltry subscription to some circulating library forty miles off. But if I live for half-a-dozen years, I'll make it as impossible that there should not be a good library in every decent house in Britain as that the shepherd's ingle-nook should want the *saut poke*. Ay, and what's that?" he continued, warming and puffing; "why should the ingle-nook itself want a shelf for *the novels?*" — "I see your drift, my man," says Sir Walter; "you're for being like Billy Pitt in Gilray's print — you want to get into the salt-box yourself." — "Yes," he responded (using a favourite adjuration) — "I have hitherto been thinking only of the wax lights, but before I'm a twelvemonth older I shall have my hand upon the tallow." — "Troth," says Scott, "you are indeed likely to be 'The grand Napoleon of the realms of *print*.'" — "If you outlive me," says Constable, with a regal smile, "I bespeak that line for my tomb-stone; but, in the meantime, may I presume to ask you to be my right-hand man when I open my campaign of Marengo? I have now settled my outline of operations — a three shilling or half-crown volume every month,

which must and shall sell, not by thousands or tens of thousands, but by hundreds of thousands—ay, by millions! Twelve volumes in the year, a halfpenny of profit upon every copy of which will make me richer than the possession of all the copyrights of all the quartos that ever were, or will be, hot-pressed!—twelve volumes, so good that millions must wish to have them, and so cheap that every butcher's callant may have them, if he pleases to let me tax him six-pence a-week!"

Many a previous consultation, and many a solitary meditation too, prompted Scott's answer. "Your plan," said he, "cannot fail, provided the books be really good; but you must not start until you have not only leading columns, but depth upon depth of reserve in thorough order. I am willing to do my part in this grand enterprise. Often, of late, have I felt that the vein of fiction was nearly worked out; often, as you all know, have I been thinking seriously of turning my hand to history. I am of opinion that historical writing has no more been adapted to the demands of the increased circles among which literature does already find its way, than you allege as to the shape and price of books in general. What say you to taking the field with a Life of the *other* Napoleon?"

The reader does not need to be told that the series of cheap volumes, subsequently issued under the title of "Constable's Miscellany," was the scheme

on which this great bookseller was brooding. Before he left Abbotsford, it was arranged that the first number of this collection should consist of one half of Waverley; the second, of the first section of a "Life of Napoleon Buonaparte by the author of Waverley;" that this Life should be comprised in four of these numbers; and that, until the whole series of his novels should have been issued, a volume every second month, in this new and uncostly form, he should keep the Ballantyne press going with a series of historical works, to be issued on the alternate months. Such were, as far as Scott was concerned, the first outlines of a daring plan never destined to be carried into execution on the gigantic scale, or with the grand appliances which the projector contemplated, but destined, nevertheless, to lead the way in one of the greatest revolutions that literary history will ever have to record — a revolution not the less sure to be completed, though as yet, after the lapse of twelve years, we see only its beginnings.

Some circumstances in the progress of the Tales of the Crusaders, begun some months before, and now on the eve of publication, must have been uppermost in Scott's mind when he met Constable's proposals on this occasion with so much alacrity. The story of *The Betrothed* — (to which he was mainly prompted by the lively and instructing conversation on Welsh history and antiquities of his friend Arch-

deacon Williams) — found no favour as it advanced with James Ballantyne; and so heavily did the critical printer's candid remonstrances weigh on the author, that he at length lost heart about the matter altogether, and determined to cancel it for ever. The tale, however, all but a chapter or two, had been printed off, and both publisher and printer paused about committing such a mass to the flames. The sheets were hung up meanwhile in Messrs Ballantyne's warehouse, and Scott, roused by the spur of disappointment, began another story — The Talisman — in which James hailed better omens. His satisfaction went on increasing as the MS. flowed in upon him; and he at last pronounced The Talisman such a masterpiece, that The Betrothed might venture abroad under its wing. Sir Walter was now reluctant on that subject, and said he would rather write two more new novels than the few pages necessary to complete his unfortunate Betrothed. But while he hesitated, the German newspapers announced "*a new romance by the author of Waverley*" as about to issue from the press of Leipsig. There was some ground for suspecting that a set of the suspended sheets might have been purloined and sold to a pirate, and this consideration put an end to his scruples. And when the German did publish the fabrication, entitled *Walladmor*, it could no longer be doubtful that some reader of Scott's sheets had

communicated at least the fact that he was breaking ground in Wales.

Early in June, then, the Tales of the Crusaders were put forth; and, as Mr Ballantyne had predicted, the brightness of the Talisman dazzled the eyes of the million as to the defects of the twin-story. Few of these publications had a more enthusiastic greeting; and Scott's literary plans were, as the reader will see reason to infer, considerably modified in consequence of the new burst of applause which attended the brilliant procession of his Saladin and Cœur de Lion.

To return for a moment to our merry conclave at Abbotsford. Constable's vast chapter of embryo schemes was discussed more leisurely on the following Monday morning, when we drove to the crags of Smailholm and the Abbey of Dryburgh, both poet and publisher talking over the past and the future course of their lives, and agreeing, as far as I could penetrate, that the years to come were likely to be more prosperous than any they had as yet seen. In the evening, too, this being his friend's first visit since the mansion had been completed, Scott (though there were no ladies and few servants) had the hall and library lighted up, that he might show him every thing to the most sparkling advantage. With what serenity did he walk about those splendid apartments, handling books, expounding armour and pictures, and rejoicing in the Babylon which he had built!

If the reader has not recently looked into the original Introduction to the Tales of the Crusaders, it will amuse him to trace in that little extravaganza Sir Walter's own embellishment of these colloquies with Constable and Ballantyne. The title is, "Minutes of Sederunt of the Shareholders designing to form a Joint-Stock Company, united for the purpose of Writing and Publishing the Class of Works called the Waverley Novels, held in the Waterloo Tavern, Regent Bridge, Edinburgh, on the 1st of June 1825." The notion of casting a preface into this form could hardly have occurred in any other year; the humorist had not far to seek for his "palpable hit." The "Gentlemen and others interested in the celebrated publications called the Waverley Novels," had all participated in the general delusions which presented so broad a mark; and their own proper "bubbles" were at the biggest — in other words, near enough the bursting.

As regards Sir Walter himself, it is not possible now to recall the jocularities of this essay without wonder and sadness. His own share in speculations remote from literature, was not indeed a very heavy one; but how remarkable that a passage like the following should have dropped from his pen who was just about to see the apparently earth-built pillars of his worldly fortune shattered in ruin, merely because, not contented with being the first author of his age,

he had chosen also to be his own printer and his own bookseller!

"In the patriarchal period," we read, "a man is his own weaver, tailor, butcher, shoemaker, and so forth; and, in the age of Stock-companies, as the present may be called, an individual may be said, in one sense, to exercise the same plurality of trades. In fact, a man who has dipt largely into these speculations, may combine his own expenditure with the improvement of his own income, just like the ingenious hydraulic machine, which, by its very waste, raises its own supplies of water. Such a person buys his bread from his own Baking Company, his milk and cheese from his own Dairy Company, takes off a new coat for the benefit of his own Clothing Company, illuminates his house to advance his own Gas Establishment, and drinks an additional bottle of wine for the benefit of the General Wine Importation Company, of which he is himself a member. Every act, which would otherwise be one of mere extravagance, is, to such a person, seasoned with the *odor lucri*, and reconciled to prudence. Even if the price of the article consumed be extravagant, and the quality indifferent, the person, who is in a manner his own customer, is only imposed upon for his own benefit. Nay, if the Joint-stock Company of Undertakers shall unite with the Medical Faculty, as proposed by the late facetious Doctor G——, under the firm of Death and the Doctor, the shareholder might contrive to secure to his heirs a handsome slice of his own death-bed and funeral expenses."

Since I have quoted this Introduction, I may as well give also the passage in which the "Eidolon Chairman" is made to announce the new direction his exertions were about to take, in furtherance of the grand "Joint-stock Adventure" for which Constable had been soliciting his alliance. The pater-

nal shadow thus addresses his mutinous offspring — Cleishbotham, Oldbuck, Clutterbuck, Dryasdust, and the rest:—

"It signifies nothing speaking — I will no longer avail myself of such weak ministers as you — I will discard you — I will unbeget you, as Sir Anthony Absolute says — I will leave you and your whole hacked stock in trade—your caverns and your castles —your modern antiques and your antiquated moderns—your confusion of times, manners, and circumstances — your properties, as player-folk say of scenery and dresses — the whole of your exhausted expedients, to the fools who choose to deal with them. I will vindicate my own fame with my own right hand, without appealing to such halting assistants,

'Whom I have used for sport, rather than need.'

— I will lay my foundations better than on quicksands — I will rear my structure of better materials than painted cards; in a word, I will write HISTORY!" . . . . . .

"As the confusion began to abate, more than one member of the meeting was seen to touch his forehead significantly, while Captain Clatterbuck humm'd,

'Be by your friends advised,
Too rash, too hasty dad,
Maugre your bolts and wise head,
The world will think you mad.'*

"The world, and you, gentlemen, may think what you please, said the Chairman, elevating his voice; "but I intend to write the most wonderful book which the world ever read—a book in which every incident shall be incredible, yet strictly true — a work recalling recollections with which the ears of this generation once tingled, and which shall be read by our children with an admiration approaching to incredulity. Such shall be the LIFE OF NAPOLEON BUONAPARTE, by the AUTHOR OF WAVERLEY!"†

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* *Midas* — a farce.

† See Waverley Novels, vol. xxxvii. p. 38, Introd.

Sir Walter begun, without delay, what was meant to be a very short preliminary sketch of the French Revolution, prior to the appearance of his hero upon the scene of action. This, he thought, might be done almost *currente calamo;* for his personal recollection of all the great events as they occurred was vivid, and he had not failed to peruse every book of any considerable importance on these subjects as it issued from the press. He apprehended the necessity, on the other hand, of more laborious study in the way of reading than he had for many years had occasion for, before he could enter with advantage upon Buonaparte's military career; and Constable accordingly set about collecting a new library of printed materials, which continued from day to day pouring in upon him, till his little parlour in Castle Street looked more like an auctioneer's premises than an author's. The first waggon delivered itself of about a hundred huge folios of the Moniteur; and London, Paris, Amsterdam, and Brussels, were all laid under contribution to meet the bold demands of his magnificent purveyor; while he himself and his confidential friends embraced every possible means of securing the use of written documents at home and abroad. The rapid accumulation of books and MSS. was at once flattering and alarming; and one of his notes to me, about the middle of June had these rhymes by way of postscript:—

"When with Poetry dealing
Room enough in a shieling:
Neither cabin nor hovel
Too small for a novel:
Though my back I should rub
On Diogenes' tub,
How my fancy could prance
In a dance of romance!
But my house I must swap
With some Brobdignag chap,
Ere I grapple, God bless me! with Emperor Nap."

In the meantime he advanced with his Introduction; and, catching fire as the theme expanded before him, had so soon several chapters in his desk, without having travelled over half the ground assigned for them, that Constable saw it would be in vain to hope for the completion of the work within four tiny duodecimos. They resolved that it should be published, in the first instance, as a separate book, in four volumes of the same size with the Tales of the Crusaders, but with more pages and more letter-press to each page. Scarcely had this been settled before it became obvious, that four such volumes, however closely printed, would never suffice; and the number was week after week extended—with corresponding alterations as to the rate of the author's payment. Mr Constable still considered the appearance of the second edition of the Life of Napoleon in his Miscellany as the great point on which the fortunes of that undertaking were to turn; and its com-

mencement was in consequence adjourned; which, however, must have been the case at any rate, as he found, on enquiry, that the stock on hand of the already various editions of the Waverley Novels was much greater than he had calculated; and therefore some interval must be allowed to elapse, before, with fairness to the retail trade, he could throw that long series of volumes into any cheaper form.

ABBOTSFORD IN 1825.

[*Various critics and correspondents have complained that the first edition of these Memoirs did not include any clear and particular description of the House of Abbotsford, in its finished condition. It appeared to me that Sir Walter's letters contained as much information on the subject as might satisfy most readers; but I now insert the fullest account that I know of—one drawn up in* 1829, *for a keepsake called the Anniversary, of which Mr Allan Cunningham had at that time the management. It was written in the character of an imaginary American, supposed to visit Scotland in the summer of* 1825, *and to examine the place, when Sir Walter was absent, under the guidance of one of the neigh-*

bouring gentlemen, tolerably familiar with its history.

I am afraid there are some inaccuracies in the sketch—but it is probably nearer the truth than anything I could substitute for it, now that many years have passed since I saw Abbotsford. Some passages have been omitted, and a few mis-statements corrected.]

"SOME fifteen or sixteen years ago, * * * * tells me, there was not a more unlovely spot, in this part of the world, than that on which Abbotsford now exhibits all its quaint architecture and beautiful accompaniment of garden and woodland. A mean farmhouse stood on part of the site of the present edifice; a "kail-yard" bloomed where the stately embattled court-yard now spreads itself; and for a thousand acres of flourishing plantations, half of which have all the appearance of being twice as old as they really are, there was but a single long straggling stripe of unthriving firs. The river must needs remain *in statu quo;* and I will not believe that any place so near those clearest and sweetest of all waters, could ever have been quite destitute of charms. The scene, however, was no doubt wild enough—a naked moor

—a few turnip fields painfully reclaimed from it—a Scotch cottage—a Scotch farm-yard, and some Scotch firs. It is difficult to imagine a more complete contrast to the Abbotsford of 1825.

"Sir W. is, as you have no doubt heard, a most zealous agriculturist, and aboriculturist especially; and he is allowed to have done things with this estate, since it came into his possession, which would have been reckoned wonders, even if they had occupied the whole of a clever and skilful man's attention, during more years than have elapsed since he began to write himself Laird of Abbotsford. He has some excellent arable land on the banks of the Tweed, and towards the little town of Melrose, which lies three miles from the mansion; but the bulk of the property is hilly country, with deep narrow dells interlacing it. Of this he has planted fully one half, and it is admitted on all hands, that his rising forest has been laid out, arranged, and managed with consummate taste, care, and success; so much so, that the general appearance of Tweedside, for some miles, is already quite altered by the graceful ranges of his woodland; and that the produce of these plantations must, in the course of twenty or thirty years more, add immensely to the yearly rental of the estate. In the meantime, the shelter afforded by the woods to the sheep-walks reserved amidst them, has prodigiously improved the pasturage, and half the surface yields

already double the rent the whole was ever thought capable of affording, while in the old unprotected condition. All through these woods there are broad riding-ways, kept in capital order, and conducted in such excellent taste, that we might wander for weeks amidst their windings without exhausting the beauties of the Poet's lounge. There are scores of waterfalls in the ravines, and near every one of them you find benches or bowers at the most picturesque points of view. There are two or three small mountain lakes included in the domain — the largest perhaps a mile in circumference; and of these also every advantage has been taken.

"But I am keeping you too long away from 'The Roof-tree of Monkbarns,' which is situated on the brink of the last of a series of irregular hills, descending from the elevation of the Eildons to the Tweed. On all sides, except towards the river, the house connects itself with the gardens (according to the old fashion now generally condemned); — so that there is no want of air and space about the habitation. The building is such a one, I dare say, as nobody but he would ever have dreamed of erecting; or if he had, escaped being quizzed for his pains. Yet it is eminently imposing in its general effect; and in most of its details, not only full of historical interest, but beauty also. It is no doubt a thing of shreds and patches, but they have been combined by a masterly

hand; and if there be some whimsicalities, that in an ordinary case might have called up a smile, who is likely now or hereafter to contemplate such a monument of such a man's peculiar tastes and fancies, without feelings of a far different order?

"By the principal approach you come very suddenly on the edifice;—as the French would say, 'Vous *tombez* sur le château;' but this evil, if evil it be, was unavoidable, in consequence of the vicinity of a public road, which cuts off the *chateau* and its *plaisance* from the main body of park and wood. The gateway is a lofty arch rising out of an embattled wall of considerable height; and the *jougs*, as they are styled, those well-known emblems of feudal authority, hang rusty at the side; this pair being relics from that great citadel of the old Douglasses, Thrieve Castle in Galloway. On entering, you find yourself within an enclosure of perhaps half an acre, two sides thereof being protected by the high wall above mentioned, all along which, inside, a trellised walk extends itself—broad, cool, and dark overhead with roses and honeysuckles. The third side, to the east, shows a screen of open arches of Gothic stone-work, filled between with a net-work of iron, not visible until you come close to it, and affording therefore delightful glimpses of the gardens, which spread upwards with many architectural ornaments of turret, porch, urn, vase, &c. This elegant

screen abuts on the eastern extremity of the house, which runs along the whole of the northern side (and a small part of the western) of the great inclosure. Within this inclosure there is room for a piece of the most *elaborate* turf; and rosaries, of all manner of shapes and sizes, gradually connect this green pavement with the roof of the trellis-walk, a verdant cloister, over which appears the grey wall with its little turrets; and over that again climb oak, elm, birch, and hazel, up a steep bank—so steep, that the trees, young as they are, give already all the effect of a sweeping amphitheatre of wood. The back-ground on that side is wholly forest; on the east, garden loses itself in forest by degrees; on the west, there is wood on wood also, but with glimpses of the Tweed between; and in the distance (some half-a-dozen miles off) a complete *sierra*, the ridge of the mountains between Tweed and Yarrow.

"The house is more than one hundred and fifty feet long in front, as I paced it; was built at two different onsets; has a tall tower at either end, the one not the least like the other; presents sundry *crowfooted, alias* zigzagged, gables to the eye; a myriad of indentations and parapets, and machicollated eaves; most fantastic waterspouts; labelled windows, not a few of them painted glass; groups of right Elizabethan chimneys; balconies of divers fashions, greater and lesser; stones carved with heraldries innumerable, let in here

and there in the wall; and a very noble projecting gateway—a fac-simile, I am told, of that appertaining to a certain dilapidated royal palace, which long ago seems to have caught in a particular manner the Poet's fancy, as witness the stanza,

> 'Of all the palaces so fair,
> Built for the royal dwelling,
> In Scotland, far beyond compare,
> Linlithgow is excelling.'*

"From this porchway, which is spacious and airy, quite open to the elements in front, and adorned with some enormous petrified stag-horns overhead, you are admitted by a pair of folding-doors at once into the hall, and an imposing *coup d'œil* the first glimpse of the Poet's interior does present. The lofty windows, only two in number, being wholly covered with coats of arms, the place appears as dark as the twelfth century, on your first entrance from noonday; but the delicious coolness of the atmosphere is luxury enough for a minute or two; and by degrees your eyes get accustomed to the effect of those 'storied panes,' and you are satisfied that you stand in one of the most picturesque of apartments. The hall is about forty feet long by twenty in height and breadth. The walls are of richly carved oak, most

* Marmion, Canto IV. Stanza 15.

part of it exceedingly dark, and brought, it seems, from the old Abbey of Dunfermline: the roof, a series of pointed arches of the same, each beam presenting in the centre a shield of arms richly blazoned: of these shields there are sixteen, enough to bear all the quarterings of a perfect pedigree if the Poet could show them; but on the maternal side (at the extremity) there are two or three blanks (of the same sort that made Louis le Grand unhappy) which have been covered with sketches of cloudland, and equipped with the appropriate motto, '*Nox alta velat.*' There is a door at the eastern end, over and round which the Baronet has placed another series of escutcheons; these are the memorials of his immediate personal connexions, the bearings of his friends and companions.* All around the cornice of this noble room there runs a continued series of blazoned shields of another sort still; at the centre of one end I saw the bloody heart of Douglas, and opposite to that the Royal Lion of Scotland,—and between the ribs there is an inscription in black letter, which I after some trials read. To the best of my recollection, the words are—'These be the Coat Armories of the Clannis and Chief Men of name wha keepit the marchys of Scotland in the aulde time for the Kinge. Trewe ware they in their tyme, and in their defense God them defendit.' There are from thirty to forty

* The Arms of Morritt, Erskine, Rose, &c. &c. &c.

shields thus distinguished, — Douglas, Soulis, Buccleugh, Maxwell, Johnstoune, Glendoning, Herries Rutherford, Kerr, Elliott, Pringle, Home, and all the other heroes of the Border Minstrelsy. The floor of this hall is black and white marble, from the Hebrides, wrought lozenge-wise; and the upper walls are completely hung with arms and armour. Two full suits of splendid steel occupy niches at the eastern end; the one an English suit of Henry the Fifth's time, the other an Italian, not quite so old. The variety of cuirasses, black and white, plain and sculptured, is endless; helmets are in equal profusion; stirrups and spurs, of every fantasy, dangle about and below them; and there are swords of every order, from the enormous two-handed weapon with which the Swiss peasants dared to withstand the spears of the Austrian chivalry, to the claymore of the "Forty-five," and the rapier of Dettingen. Indeed, I might come still lower; for, among other spoils, I saw Polish lances, gathered by the Author of Paul's Letters on the Field of Waterloo, and a complete suit of chain mail taken off the corpse of one of Tippoo's body guard at Seringapatam. A series of German executioners' swords was pointed out to me, on the blade of one of which are the arms of Augsburg, and a legend, which may be thus rendered, —

> Dust, when I strike, to dust: From sleepless grave,
> Sweet Jesu! stoop, a sin-stained soul to save.

"'Stepping westward' (as Wordsworth says) from this hall, you find yourself in a narrow, low-arched room, which runs quite across the house, having a blazoned window again at either extremity, and filled all over with smaller pieces of armour and weapons, — such as swords, firelocks, spears, arrows, darts, daggers, &c. &c. &c. Here are the pieces esteemed most precious by reason of their histories respectively. I saw, among the rest, Rob Roy's gun, with his initials R. M. C., *i. e.* Robert Macgregor Campbell, round the touchhole; the blunderbuss of Hofer, a present to Sir Walter from his friend Sir Humphrey Davy;* a magnificent sword, as magnificently mounted, the gift of Charles the First to the great Montrose; the hunting bottle of bonnie King Jamie; Buonaparte's pistols (found in his carriage at Waterloo, I believe), *cum multis aliis.* I should have mentioned that stag horns and bulls' horns (the petrified relics of the old mountain monster, I mean), and so forth, are suspended in great abundance above all the doorways of these armories; and that, in one corner, a dark one as it ought to be, there is a complete assortment of the old Scottish instruments of torture, not forgetting the thumbikens under which Cardinal Carstairs did *not* flinch, and the more terrific iron crown of Wishart the Martyr, being a sort of

* See the Life of Sir Humphrey Davy, by his Brother, vol. I. p. 506.

barred head-piece, screwed on the victim at the stake, to prevent him from crying aloud in his agony. In short, there can be no doubt that, like Grose of merry memory, the mighty minstrel

> '— Has a fouth o' auld nicknackets,
> Rusty airn caps and jinglin jackets,
> Wad haud the Lothians three in tackets
> A towmont guid.'

These relics of other, and for the most part darker years, are disposed, however, with so much grace and elegance, that I doubt if Mr Hope himself would find anything to quarrel with in the beautiful apartments which contain them. In the hall, when the weather is hot, the Baronet is accustomed to dine; and a gallant refectory no question it must make. A ponderous chandelier of painted glass swings from the roof; and the chimney-piece (the design copied from the stone work of the Abbot's Stall at Melrose) would hold rafters enough for a Christmas fire of the good old times. Were the company suitably attired, a dinner party here would look like a scene in the Mysteries of Udolpho.

"Beyond the smaller, or rather I should say the narrower armoury, lies the dining-parlour proper, however; and though there is nothing Udolphoish here, yet I can well believe that, when lighted up and the curtains down at night, the place may give

no bad notion of the private snuggery of some lofty lord abbot of the time of the Canterbury Tales. The room is a handsome one, with a low and richly carved roof of dark oak again; a huge projecting bow-window, and the dais elevated *more majorum;* the ornaments of the roof, niches for lamps, &c. &c., in short, all the minor details, are, I believe, *fac similes* after Melrose. The walls are hung in crimson, but almost entirely covered with pictures, of which the most remarkable are — the parliamentary general, Lord Essex, a full length on horseback; the Duke of Monmouth, by Lely; a capital Hogarth, by himself; Prior and Gay, both by Jervas; and the head of Mary Queen of Scots, in a charger, painted by *Amias Cawood* the day after the decapitation at Fotheringay, and sent some years ago as a present to Sir Walter from a Prussian nobleman, in whose family it had been for more than two centuries. It is a most death-like performance, and the countenance answers well enough to the coins of the unfortunate beauty, though not at all to any of the portraits I have happened to see. Among various family pictures, I noticed particularly Sir Walter's great-grandfather, the old cavalier mentioned in one of the epistles in Marmion, who let his beard grow after the execution of Charles the First. There is also a portrait of Lucy Walters, mother to the Duke

of Monmouth; and another of Anne Duchess of Buccleugh, the same who,

> 'In pride of youth, in beauty's bloom,
> Had wept o'er Monmouth's bloody tomb.'

Beyond and alongside are narrowish passages, which make one fancy one's self in the penetralia of some dim old monastery; for roofs and walls and windows (square, round, and oval alike) are sculptured in stone, after the richest relics of Melrose and Roslin Chapel. One of these leads to a charming breakfast-room, which looks to the Tweed on one side, and towards Yarrow and Ettrick, famed in song, on the other: a cheerful room, fitted up with novels, romances, and poetry, at one end; and the other walls covered with a valuable and beautiful collection of water-colour drawings, chiefly by Turner, and Thomson of Duddingstone — the designs, in short, for the magnificent work entitled "Provincial Antiquities of Scotland." There is one good oil painting over the chimney-piece — Fast Castle by Thomson, *alias* the Wolf's Crag of the Bride of Lammermoor — and some large black and white drawings of the Vision of Don Roderick, by Sir James Steuart of Allanbank (whose illustrations of Marmion and Mazeppa you have seen or heard of), are at one end of the parlour. The room is crammed with queer cabinets and boxes, and in a niche there is a bust of old

Henry Mackenzie, by Joseph of Edinburgh. Returning towards the armoury, you have, on one side of a most religious-looking corridor, a small green-house, with a fountain playing before it—the very fountain that in days of yore graced the cross of Edinburgh, and used to flow with claret at the coronation of the Stuarts—a pretty design, and a standing monument of the barbarity of modern innovation. From the small armoury you pass into the drawing-room, another handsome and spacious apartment, with antique ebony furniture and crimson silk hangings, cabinets, china, and mirrors *quantum suff.*, and some portraits; among the rest, Dryden, by Lely, with his grey hairs floating about in a most picturesque style, eyes full of wildness, presenting the old bard, I take it, in one of those "tremulous moods" in which we have it on record he appeared when interrupted in the midst of his Alexander's Feast. From this you pass into the largest of all these rooms, the library. It is an oblong of some fifty feet by thirty, with a projection in the centre, opposite the fire-place, terminating in a grand bow-window, fitted up with books also, and, in fact, constituting a sort of chapel to the church. The roof is of carved oak again—a very rich pattern—chiefly *à la* Roslin; and the book-cases, which are also of richly carved oak, reach high up the walls all round. The collection amounts, in this room, to some fifteen or twenty

thousand volumes, arranged according to their subjects: British history and antiquities filling the whole of the chief wall; English poetry and drama, classics and miscellanies, one end; foreign literature, chiefly French and German, the other. The cases on the side opposite the fire are wired, and locked, as containing articles very precious and very portable. One consists entirely of books and MSS. relating to the insurrections of 1715 and 1745; and another (within the recesses of the bow-window) of treatises *de re magica*, both of these being (I am told, and can well believe) in their several ways, collections of the rarest curiosity. My cicerone pointed out in one corner a magnificent set of Mountfaucon, fifteen volumes folio, bound in the richest manner in scarlet, and stamped with the royal arms, the gift of King George IV. There are few living authors of whose works presentation copies are not to be found here. My friend showed me inscriptions of that sort, in, I believe, every European dialect extant. The books are all in prime condition, and bindings that would satisfy Dr Dibdin. The only picture is Sir Walter's eldest son, in hussar uniform, and holding his horse—by Allan of Edinburgh—a noble portrait, over the fire-place; and the only bust is that of Shakspeare, from the Avon monument, in a small niche in the centre of the east side. On a rich stand of porphyry, in one corner reposes a tall

silver urn, filled with bones from the Piræus, and bearing the inscription, "Given by George Gordon, Lord Byron, to Sir Walter Scott, Bart."

"Connected with this fine room, and fronting — which none of the other sitting rooms do — to the south, is a smaller library, the *sanctum* of the Author. This room, which seems to be a crib of about twenty feet, contains, of what is properly called furniture, nothing but a small writing-table in the centre, a plain arm-chair covered with black leather—and a single chair besides; plain symptoms that this is no place for company. On either side of the fire-place there are shelves filled with books of reference, chiefly, of course, folios; but except these, there are no books save the contents of a light gallery which runs round three sides of the room, and is reached by a hanging stair of carved oak in one corner There are only two portraits—an original of the beautiful and melancholy head of Claverhouse (Bonny Dundee), and a small full-length of Rob Roy. Various little antique cabinets stand round about, each having a bust on it. Stothard's Canterbury Pilgrims are over the mantle-piece; above them is a Highland target, with a star of claymores; and in one corner I saw a collection of really useful weapons—those of the forest-craft, to wit—axes and bills, and so forth, of every calibre.

"In one corner of the *sanctum* there is a little holy of holies, in the shape of a closet, which looks

like the oratory of some dame of old romance and opens into the gardens; and the tower which furnishes this below, forms above a private staircase accessible from the gallery, and leading to the upper regions.

"The view to the Tweed from all the principal apartments is beautiful. You look out from among bowers over a lawn of sweet turf, upon the clearest of all streams, fringed with the wildest of birch woods, and backed with the green hills of Ettrick Forest."

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END OF VOL. VII.

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